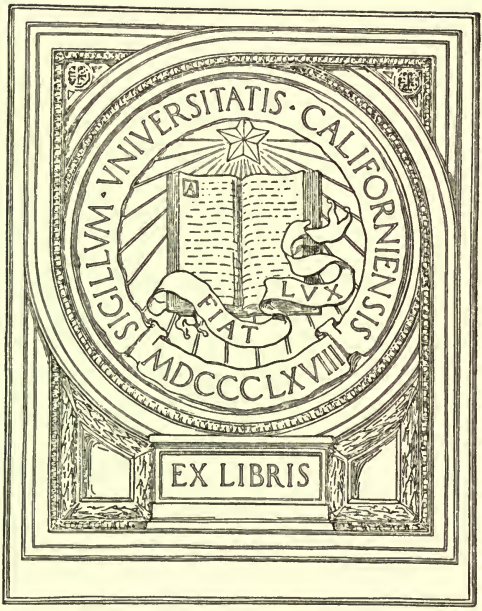
Mr. Milo Bush
AND
Other Worthies
BY
HAYDEN CARRUTH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LOOKING FOR LIKELY CATS

MR. MILO BUSH
and Other Worthies

THEIR RECOLLECTIONS

By

HAYDEN CARRUTH
AUTHOR OF
"THE ADVENTURES OF JONES" ETC.

Illustrated by
A. B. FROST

NEW YORK AND LONDON
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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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TO

E. B. C. B.

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Mr. Milo Bush and Other Worthies

I

GOLDSTEIN'S EQUESTRIAN JOKE

Isaac Goldstein is a citizen of this republic, long engaged in merchandising. He has not been a fixed dealer, glorying in gorgeous window displays and bellowing advertisements in the Sunday papers; but, instead, he has been a peripatetic trader, going to the customer rather than waiting for the customer to come to him. And in this there are not wanting those ready to maintain that he has shown the part of wisdom, since, these logicians contend, it is as absurd for a merchant to wait for customers as it would be for a hunter to wait at home for game to bound across his hearth-stone or alight upon his sideboard. But these speculations need not detain us;

rather let us follow Goldstein afield as he pursues the sometimes uneven tenor of his way.

As has been in a manner hinted at, Isaac Goldstein is a pack-peddler. For twenty years he has gone up and down the more sequestered rural regions of the land, carrying an immense load of miscellaneous merchandise, which he has offered at a profit so small that he has twenty times a day stood aghast at his own hardihood. It would have been easier to work, but he has preferred to peddle. Dogs have bitten him — yea, more, dogs have gnawed him, dogs have partaken of him, dogs have whetted their fangs upon him, dogs have all but buried him in the back yard in the guise of a bone; but not once has the base thought of deserting proud Trade for paltry Labor crossed the Goldstein mind. And not dogs alone. The rains have descended and wet him, the snows have come down and covered him, the mud has oozed about his feet, the dust has swirled around his head, small boys have pelted him with promiscuous missiles, and occasionally a bucolic bull has tossed him on his horns and bel-

lowed as vaingloriously as if he had despatched a matador.

But Goldstein has not complained, and he has stuck to trade. Personally he is a man who would attract attention anywhere, solely for the reason that he would not deserve it. He is somewhat below the average height, with stooped shoulders, rather more than his share of nose, and with a black, bushy, tangled beard, a woven-wire beard, or, to enlarge the figure, a jungle-like beard, a trackless, unexplored, unknown beard, which even the dogs, despite all their efforts, have never penetrated. But though this description does not set Goldstein forth in glowing colors, it must not be thought that there is anything repulsive about him. Far from it; he has an insinuating way and much personal magnetism. Nor is he any fool; on the contrary, he hath a pretty wit, though one tinctured a little by his trade instincts, as shall appear.

For years Goldstein handled miscellaneous goods, done up in a great square canvas-covered pack, ranging from needles in assorted sizes to table-cloths, and from husking-gloves to sleigh-bells, and includ-

ing writing-ink, chromoes, dry yeast, plated jewelry, cough medicine, accordions, rubber dolls, dress patterns, playing-cards, Methodist hymnals, Episcopal prayer-books, and Catholic rosaries — the beads of the last-named whittled out of wood of the true cross, obtained by Goldstein from an uncle in the Holy Land at considerable expense.

But the rage for specialization reached Goldstein at last, and he gradually began to reduce his stock, and finally he gave his whole attention to some one thing. For a while he handled an improved carpet-stretcher, of the kind used in the White House and by the Crowned Heads of Europe. Then he took up an improved wire rat-trap, a very Lorelei of a rat-trap, a siren rat-trap, a rat-trap warranted to lure rats as sin lureth mankind, and to catch and hold and destroy the same. Other household specialties followed, till at last he struck upon a certain style of clothes-horse, an ingenious contrivance for the proper drying and airing of clothes and household linen after being ironed. It was called the Chicago Imperator Adjustable Clothes-

Horse, and was an apparatus which stood on the floor and spread out like a banyan-tree when in use, but closed up like a Lombardy poplar after it had served its purpose. It was the same as used with great success by the President and members of the Cabinet, as supplied to them a year before by the present dealer, a man not given to small deceit or any sinful games. He sold the clothes-horse for one dollar, affording a profit so small and abjectly insignificant that should his brother, the manufacturer, come to know of it, he (the present speaker) should fear for his life at the avenging hands of the outraged relative.

It happened, a few months ago, that Goldstein one day found himself in a settlement of Norwegians in a central Minnesota county. Business was poor. Spring was creeping up that way, and the mud was deep. The dogs were unusually vicious, and he was averaging a bite a mile. Goldstein was as near being discouraged as was possible for him. His troubles even roused his fancy (a member of the Goldstein make-up of no great size or activity), and

for a moment the thought crossed his mind of how pleasant it would be could he mount one of the clothes-horses which he carried on his back and gallop away from the forbidding country. This idea so pleased him that he chuckled to himself, and came up quite briskly to the next house, where, after the dog had bitten him to his (the animal's) satisfaction, he entered and began a vigorous and voluble enlargement on the worth of his clothes-horses, ending with his invariable joke that "she doan keeck, an' you doan neffer haf to feed her no oats."

But eloquence and humor alike failed to move the economical-minded Scandinavian, and Goldstein was just departing, when the man happened casually to mention that a great wedding was to take place in the neighborhood soon, the son of one Ole Olson, a prominent farmer, marrying the daughter of a certain Knut Knutson, an equally important resident of that picturesque and interesting neighborhood.

Goldstein paused with his hand on the latch. The information opened up a vast vista of profit to his mind's eye.

"Vedding, eh?" he said. "Vell, I tells

you vhat you vants to do. Shust you geet von of dem hosses for a bresent for de pride. Eh?"

"You tank he do?" inquired the son of the fjords, doubtfully.

"Do? Do? you ask. Vhy, she vas *made* for eet!" He wrenched one of the clothes-horses from the bundle and stood it before the halting Viking. "Vill she do!" he cried, patting the article as if it had been a living horse. "Vhy, great shimminy, dose Wanderbilts couldn't geet noddings more better for a vedding bresent dan she is! Vhat you tink you geef de pride — a di'-mont neglace, a beelyard table, a tame bear? Doan you do eet! You puy *her*, an' gif her to de pride, an' she be most tickled to det'."

The Norwegian looked at his wife and then back at Goldstein, and said,

"Vell, aye tank aye take heem." And he handed out his dollar and closed the bargain.

Goldstein put the dollar in his pocket and went out. The dog bit him again, but he felt it not. Great thoughts were racing through his mind. He felt as if he was rid-

ing his clothes-horses at last — four of them abreast, with another quartet driven ahead with red ribbons, like the man in the circus. He plunged away through the mud, while the dog went back to the house with a lame jaw.

The day which was to make the fair Lena Knutson and the brave Lars Olson one had arrived. Weddings in that neighborhood began early and lasted late. It was not past ten o'clock in the forenoon when the first team drove up to the door of the bride's parents. Mr. Peter Bjorkson and family tumbled out and came into the house. Mr. Peter Bjorkson carried an immense package done up in heavy paper. He unrolled it, and to the bride, in melodious Norse, said words which we may freely translate after this manner:

"We bring thee, Lena, with our best wishes, a poor offering, but it comes from our hearts — a clothes-horse. It won't kick, and doesn't need any oats."

The big blue eyes of the bride beamed with pleasure as she took it and thanked the givers. It was, in fact, precisely what

she wanted. But time presses, and we must hurry on.

Which is why the exact words of presentation of Mr. Tosten Estenson and family, who arrived ten minutes later, and brought a clothes-horse, need not detain us. The next to come was Swan Swanson and wife. They brought a clothes-horse for the bride. They were followed by another neighbor, Erick Bogstieson and family. Nor did the Bogstiesons forget that the bride was soon to begin housekeeping; so they brought to her, with all good wishes, a clothes-horse, as, indeed, did also Neighbor Ophdahl. Space is short; the historian may barely say that Axel Ottoson, Thor Nordgaard, Hans Sjorring, and Ole Iverson brought to the bride clothes-horses. At one o'clock, P. M., there was a stud of nineteen clothes-horses in the house, and more, so to say, neighing outside. At 1.30 the bride looked out of the window.

"Father," she said, controlling herself with an effort, "there are twenty-three here now, and there comes Mr. Mikkleson up the walk with another."

The voice of a man was heard at the back

door. "We have brought Lena a clothes-horse," the voice said. The bride burst into tears and sank to the floor. But this matter must detain us no longer. It is almost too painful to dwell upon.

Up rose the bridegroom, like Thor of old, and swore by Odin and Valhalla and the Valkyries and *their* horses, and called for volunteers to go with him and help him to catch that peddler. Twenty strong men responded. As they went out they encountered a couple of neighbors with clothes-horses for the bride. They leaped into their wagons and drove away toward the railroad station. On the road they met several other neighbors carrying large mysterious packages, the contents of which they but too well guessed. At the station the ticket-agent told them that a man answering the peddler's description had boarded the train the night before with a ticket for Des Moines, Iowa. They returned, passing a few scattering neighbors bearing a serviceable article of clothes-horse.

At that moment two hundred miles away plodded Isaac Goldstein, with a pack of Chicago Imperator Adjustable Clothes-Horses

on his back, which he was offering to the people of Iowa at the ridiculous price of one dollar, with the warrantee that they would not kick and required no fodder. Guardedly, too, he occasionally inquired for weddings.

II

MEN OF MARK

Commonly when anyone else told a story in Shanks's grocery store Mr. Milo Bush would move about uneasily on his customary dried-apple barrel and sniff the air superciliously. When the man made a palpable misstatement of fact he would break in and frankly agree with it, at the same time gently casting doubts on the obvious truths of the other's tale. The story finished, Mr. Bush would invariably begin one of his own before anyone else could speak. Indeed, he would oftentimes "succeed himself," like a fortunate office holder, and follow one tale with another, to the manifest disgust of such *raconteurs* as Mr. Mark Wallis and Mr. Abner Blackmark. It was on an occasion of this kind that, after recalling the instructive experience of a young novelist from the East who came out looking for local color — and found it — he went on in this manner:

"Now this man Mosher, that you heard the boys speaking of as now being in California, and in the Legislature or the penitentiary — some says one, and some says the other — why, you ought to a-knowed him. He was just the smartest business man that ever struck *this* town. He wasn't what you'd call an eddicated man, nor he wasn't a rich man, nor he didn't have no particular trade or profession, nor even any special *business*, but he was just lightning on general business, all the same. He wasn't anything to *look* at, either — went around wearing old clothes, and had a kind of a cramped-up-appearing face, as if his features was crowded. From what I know of him now, I should say that they wa'n't probably his features a-tall, but the features he had euchred some bigger man out of. If you'd seen him you'd a-said he didn't know enough to lay straight in bed, and likely next day he'd a-had your pocket-book and a deed to your house and lot. He was 'way up on business — plain, straight, legitimate business.

"Made his start here by selling a snow tunnel to a Boston man. That's the plain

trooth — run a fifteen-hundred-foot tunnel under thirty feet of snow in Plug Hat Gulch, and sold it for $4000 as a developed mine. When the snow melted in the spring that Boston man said — Well, to have *heard* him you'd never thought he was from Boston; you'd a-said he was from some place where they teached hot, bloo, rip-snorting language in the public schools, and that he was a graduate of the high-school. Talk! Well, Pete Kimlin was the profanest man in *this* town, but after he heard that Boston man he just quit. He said he seen the whole thing laid ahead of him — that he only knowed a very little about the rujuments.

"But the way Mosher salted the stock on the Britisher was what I was going to tell you about. You've heard of this here watering the stock by them there Wall Street men? Well, Mosher *salted* the stock, just like you'd salt a gold-mine you was going to sell to a tenderfoot. The Britisher was named Edgewater, and he had a roll of money like a cotton bale. He was looking for investments, and we all had 'em for him. We woke that feller up in the night to show

him investments. We showed him two investments at a time. I'll bet he thought he'd struck the home office of the Great Original World's Supply Investment Factory, and that it was running on double time. We give ourselves plumbago bowing and scraping to him, and calling him 'My Lord,' and 'Your Highness,' and such stuff, thinking he'd like it. But he was shy. Nibbled a little once or twice, but never took hold of the hook. We tried every kind of bait, but he wouldn't rise. All this time Mosher was gawking round town talking loud 'bout the American eagle, and saying as how the bird could scratch the British lion's eyes out with one foot tied behind his back, and that Englishmen ought to be rid out of the country on rails, and all such criminal language as that. There was talk of lynching Mosher, and it went mighty close to being done.

"Then one day what did Mosher do but walk up to the Englishman in front of the hotel and slaps him on the back — slams him right plumb between his royal shoulder-blades — and says he: 'Mr. Britisher' — just like that — 'Mr. Britisher, why don't

you buy a stock-ranch?' The man said he just as soon, and asked him what he had to offer. 'I've got a passel of fifteen or twenty thousand head — ain't counted 'em lately,' says Mosher, cool as a hippopotamus; and there we sot speechless, knowing as we did that he hadn't a steer to his name. 'I've looked at some stock,' says the Britisher, 'but the prices seem to be too high.' 'I'll make *that* all right,' says Mosher, and then he names a figure per head about half what good stock was worth; and we continued to set speechless, or mostly so, making quiet bets that he couldn't deliver the goods; but he did, and I reckon he could a-been delivering of 'em yet, if he'd a-wanted to.

"Mosher still had the heft of the $4000 he had touched the Boston man for, and he just rid out about ten miles, and bought a few hundred head of good stock, and made some arrangements. Then the next day he took the Britisher and his friend out and planted 'em on the edge of some underbrush a little ways from a small butte, and then says he, 'Now, Mr. Britisher, I'll just have that there stock driv by here, and we'll

inspect 'em and count 'em, and then you can just do's you please about taking 'em.' Then the men he'd made arrangements with begun to drive the cattle by in a long string between where they was and the butte; and Mosher and the Britisher and his friend sot there on their hosses and looked at 'em, and counted 'em, till some fifteen or sixteen thousand had trooped along, and Mosher said that was all; and they rode back, and the Britisher paid the money, mighty tickled at his bargain; after which Mosher went away, giving out that he was going to California for his health, his nerves being shattered, though there wa'n't no particular sign of it. Leastways the Britisher didn't take that view of it when he found there was only four or five hundred head of the stock, the arrangemented men having been hustling 'em through the chaparral and round the butte on a dead run, so that each of the critters had gone by and got counted at least ten times. But, being only a furriner, his language wa'n't nothing to compare with the Boston man's, though they said he could be heard over five hundred yards, and that, *considering*, wasn't so bad.

"Then there was Pugsley, *Lawyer* Pugsley — *he* understood wot he was here for. The railroad company was *his* meat, and he always used Old Man Knight for bait. Finally the company give him $500 to leave town and settle on a rival line, and it 'ud been money in the company's pocket if it had done it sooner. When Pugsley got at a petit jury on a damage case agin a corporation, the court-house janitor always just sent out and got a bale of pocket-handkerchiefs for the twelve men, so's to save the floor from getting all sloppy. The sheriff knowed that Pugsley was reg'larly *bound* to make 'em cry 'fore he got through with 'em. 'Silence in the court!' the jedge used to holler; 'the jury mustn't cry out loud. No. 4, stop that boohooing!'

"Pugsley was the making of Old Man Knight. The old man goes 'round now with his hair sticking out a hole in his hat and his shoes tied up with bits of wire, but when Pugsley was here he wore a hair-tight hat and congress gaiters. The old man just *couldn't* go near the railroad without something happening. 'Fore he'd ride ten mile his thumb would get catched, or

his toe nipped, or *something* would happen, and there he was. Pugsley would take it up, on shares, of course — and the jury, a-swabbing its eyes and a-wiping its nose, would find for the plaintiff. It begun with the old man's sorrel hoss. In his prime that hoss was prob'bly worth $12. There was a graderal bear movement in the hoss till he got down so's he was worth consid'rable less than nothing. He just stood in the stable and et his head off from day to day, the old man being too lazy to dispose of him. Finally he took sick, and then the old man seen he'd *got* to do something, so he led him away down the railroad track, his intention being to shoot him. Somehow a train struck him and killed him, and the old man come back tickled because he had got out of the job. Pugsley heard of it, went to the old man, told him he had been outraged, took the case, sued the company, and the jury, all wet a-looking at the picture of a poor, helpless feller-citizen, whose fambly nag and sole support had been snatched away by a heartless corporation, brought in a verdict for $200 damages.

" But the biggest case Pugsley ever pulled

off was when the company busted the old man's back. You see, the old scoundrel was the laziest man that ever tired himself out resting. Never done a stroke of work in his life. Never *thought* of working. Never *dreamt* of it. The *igee* of working never in his whole long life popped into his mind. Used to go over to the depot at about 9 o'clock and wait for the 11-o'clock passenger. Always stood and leaned agin the east end of the building with his back and waited. After the 11-o'clock passenger had come he would wait for the 12.30 freight, eating a little crackers and cheese he had stopped here at Shanks's and hooked on the way over. When the freight had gone he would wait for the 2.15 down passenger. After that he would linger for the 4-o'clock up freight. Then he'd keep on leaning till 5, or mebby half past, kinder hoping for an extra, but if it didn't come he'd make a big effort, straighten up, say he 'lowed the country was going to the dogs if we didn't have more greenbacks, and then p'int for home by way of Shanks's. Done this reg'lar from the 1st of March till November 30th. Got took with cramps one

morning and didn't get over in time for the 11-o'clock passenger. Engineer missed him as he come round the bend, socked on the brakes, and stopped down a hundred yards. Station agent had to go down and tell him it was all right 'fore he'd come on.

"Well, one summer the company decided to move its depot up nearer the water-tank. Got it all ready one day and hitched twelve mules on the west end. Of course the old man was in his place agin the east end. The drivers started the mules, yanked along the building, and naturally down went the old man on his back. That afternoon he brought suit agin the railroad company through Pugsley for $5000 damages. When the trial come on it was a great day for Pugsley. Had the old man there on a stretcher with two doctors and an eddicated nurse. 'Gentlemen of the jury,' says Pugsley, 'what did this here low-lived, leather-souled corporation do? Snatched away the natural support of my client and your feller-townsman! Sneaked up and without doo warning attached and hitched on twelve base mules, knowing full well that my client was in position, and then yanked away its depot

from behind my innercent and unsuspecting client, allowing him to fall to the ground and break his spiral colyum in two places! Gentlemen of the jury, can such things be and overcome us like a thunder-cloud? This company is a common carrier. By holding up my client once it had entered into an agreement to hold him up again. By not yanking its depot once it had entered into an agreement never to yank it. My client, as you know, is a poor man, the sole support of a wife and seven children and a widdered mother. Has a plain private citizen no rights? If things go on thus, gentlemen of the jury, how long before some corporation will attach hireling mules to our beds and snake 'em from under our helpless bodies in the still watches of the night? Are we safe in this court-house? How do we know that twelve railroad mules may not at this moment be snorting outside eager to jerk us into eternity? What is the answer of the twelve intelligent men I see before me to these twelve mules?'

"The jury awarded the damages without leaving their seats. Then the company seen

it had best compromise with Pugsley and get him off its line.

"But all the jayhawkers that come out here ain't good business men, not by a long shot. There was Buckminster. Can't just tell wot Buckminster might a-done at business if he'd ever got a start, but he was so onlucky that he couldn't get within forty rods of business. He was the onluckiest man I ever knowed, and I've knowed a-many onlucky men too, having made a kind of study of 'em, so to speak. But this here Buckminster just naturally laid over anything *I* ever seen or heered tell of in the onlucky line.

"The fust day he struck the Territory it begun. He had a light wagon and a team of mules, and 'lowed to start a stage line betwixt American Eagle and Ghost Prairie. Druv into town and stopped in the Square. Each mule cocked his right ear for'ards and his left ear back'ards, put his head down, and just as if somebody had counted 'One, two, three — go!' for 'em, or dropped a hat, them mules began to kick like all get out, fust one up, t'other one down, t'other one up, fust one down, like a machine; and some

o' the pieces of that wagon didn't fall for — well, not for — well, *some* of 'em *never* was *seen* to fall, though I s'pose, of course, they did evenchooly come down *somewheres*. Well, him and his wife crawled out, and says he, cheerful as a bull-frog, says he, 'I've got the mules yet, anyhow; I'll just hustle for another wagon'; and he started out to do it; and what happened while he was gone? Them mules walked over to the town well, pulled off the cover with their teeth, and just dove right in and was drownded.

"Was Buckminster discouraged? Not a ding-batted bit. On the con*tray*ry, he was cheerful as a — a — laying hen — just like a laying hen, gentlemen — reminded everybody that saw him of a durned old cackling, laying hen. Took his wife and walked up to the hotel. And what do you reckon? Man there cleaned him out of half his money by selling him stock in a gold-mine that didn't exist — acchooly didn't *exist* — no such *thing* — *wasn't* such a mine *nowhere, nohow;* not a *salted* mine even, which mebby Buckminster could of sold to somebody else, and kept money easy and in circulation, but a mine which wa'n't no mine

at all 'cause there wa'n't no such thing. And the man was a stranger too, and lit out with the cash, and it never done the town no good.

"And what did this here Buckminster do next? Bought a house with what he had left. Cheerful? Why, dog my cats — dog *all* of my cats — if the feller didn't whistle, 'Pop goes the weasel' while they was making out the deed — and the pieces of his wagon not all down yet, and his mules standing on their heads in twenty feet of water, and a total stranger streaking out of town with his wad! 'Pop goes the fubgasted weasel,' gentlemen, while the lawyer was making out the deed of a five-hundred-dollar house for eight hundred and fifty! Cheerful as a lop-horned cow, I swear.

"Buckminster's notion was to start a boarding-house. Might as well of tried to start a shot-tower. While he and his wife was marketing, the third day, a cyclone come along and blew the house galley-west, with every jim-fizzled boarder in it, and rattling round like the seeds in a dry gourd. Bet a peck of red apples that house is end-

over-ending yet, with good boarders sifting out the cracks.

"Next? Went to boarding himself, and got a job on the street. Still cheerful — say, *whistling* wa'n't good enough now — took to *singing*, reg'lar. 'Cap'n Jenks,' 'Sweet by-and-by,' 'Old Joe stood at the garden gate,' 'Doxology,' and all such songs. Luck change? Hardly. Wife run away with a travelling dentist. Said *she* couldn't stand it no longer. What did *he* say? Said a wife wa'n't a necessity. Argyed that wives was luxuries. Let on he thought they was going out of style. Offered to bet $10 the best-dressed men didn't have 'em. *And* kept up his pesky music. Took to singing 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep.' Reckon he must of been thinking of his mules.

"Nothing more to lose, hey? You didn't know that there horn-swizzled Phil Buckminster. You bet there *was* something more for *him* to lose! One day a letter come to the postmaster from back East, where he used to live, saying his name wa'n't Buckminster at all, but Tubbs, *Tom* Tubbs, I believe; that he'd changed it when he had

to leave town for setting the Baptist church afire, just to see if a Baptist church would burn, or if it was too wet. So there was Philip Buckminster without even his *name* left.

"What'd'e do next? Why, hang *me*, there wa'n't but one thing for him *to* do! He went into politics, of course. The people felt sorry for him, and elected him County Clerk. He's held the office ever since; yanks out his salary each month, gets rid of it like a fool, and goes back to work. And still cheerful? Cheerful, gentlemen, as a durned red-headed willipus-wallipus — or more so."

III

GREELEY'S HANDWRITING

I had never known a tramp printer of sufficient age who had not worked on the New York *Tribune* in the Greeley days, and who did not, consequently, have reminiscences of the great editor's copy. With this fact in mind one evening, when old Mark Wallis, my compositor, was sober, and therefore in a colloquial mood, I gently led up to the subject.

"Yes," he said, with the utmost confidence, "I was on the *Tribune* for a year in the early sixties. I never saw much of Greeley's copy, as that was mostly set by one man — a hoary-headed anachronism, who smoked a cob pipe with the corn still on it. He boasted that he could read Greeley's copy at three yards with one eye shut. Tangled and terrible as it was, it was said to be really less difficult to read when taken in detail than you might suppose, much of its bad reputation having sprung

from the horror inspired in surveying a page of it as a whole. But whether difficult or not, there were few errors made in setting it. I never knew of an instance in the *Tribune* office like the one I once met with in a small Ohio town, where the editor was one week obliged to put this on his first page, after his second and third had been printed: '☞ Erratum: For "Price of Nails," in the foreign editorial on our inside, read "Prince of Wales."'

"This man of the agricultural pipe, who was named Larkway, and who, I hope in the interest of archæology, has been preserved in some museum, was so much given to bragging about his ability to read Greeley's copy that he was a burden to the office. There came to be a tacit understanding that an attempt must be made to humble him; but when the attempt was made it was practically a failure.

"Mr. Greeley was constantly receiving offerings of the products of the earth from rural admirers, as if he were a sort of modern Ceres and the *Tribune* office his temple. Sometimes it would be a big melon; again a prize squash; on another occasion a cham-

pion pumpkin. From the choice ears of corn which he got, Larkway used to make his pipes. Often he would not even remove the husks, and on one occasion these caught fire as he was studying an obscure word, and gained considerable headway before he noticed it. Sometimes an aspiring country boy would send Mr. Greeley a whistle made out of a pig's tail, just to show that it could be done, despite the popular belief to the contrary; and Larkway would take one of these, bore a hole through it, and use it for a stem to his pipe, thus getting, in a crude form, along with his tobacco, that Southern staple, hog and hominy.

"One day a worshipper in Herkimer County sacrificed on the Greeley altar two young roosters, alive. They were of a new strain, originated by the man, and he had named it the 'Go-West' breed. Mr. Greeley was much interested in the new fowls, and gave the man a good notice in the agricultural department, and cooped them under his desk, bestowing upon them an old straw hat for their brooding-place, since they were not large enough to roost.

"In fact, the man, in his eagerness to pour

out his feathery libation, had sent these cockerels when they could not have been over a month old. They were so young that they required soft food, so Greeley used to bring down corn meal and mix it up with water for them. This pabulum, together with the cockroaches, which they soon learned to run to earth, constituted their diet, and they prospered and grew. But they had not been in the office a fortnight before they developed a trick which brought them into disfavor. They learned to eat the paste. They would hop up on their owner's desk and gorge themselves from the paste-pot as regularly as he went out, seldom leaving enough to stick a gumless postage-stamp.

"It was a favorite plan of Greeley's to clip an item from a loathed contemporary, paste it on the top of a sheet of copy paper, and then proceeded to tear the unfortunate author of the paragraph limb from limb, beginning with the truculent, 'You lie, you villain, you lie!' and ending with the crushing, 'We don't want to hear from you again.' Several times, when boiling with rage at something he had

just clipped, he started to dab it on a piece of paper, and found the paste-pot polished out like a lamp chimney, and saw those two roosters standing about in a calm attitude almost ready to burst. He endured it a week for the sake of the breed, but it happened once too often, and Greeley was the one who burst. He sent for the foreman, and said to him:

"'Do you see those two confounded young roosters? They've eaten up my paste. They're full of it. They're waiting for me to get some more. I want you to take 'em up stairs, and never let me see 'em again.'

"The foreman tucked a rooster under either arm, and did as he was told; and thus they came to make their home in the composing-room.

"Here they continued to prosper, getting plenty of cockroaches and corn meal, with an occasional snatch at the foreman's paste-pot; and once in a while the galley-boy used to give them a mouthful of news ink on the end of a column rule, which seemed to agree with them, though this, or something else, had a bad effect on their tempers, and they

began to fight each other a good deal. They constantly grew more combative, until it seemed that, instead of being called the Go-Wests, a more appropriate name would have been the On-to-Richmonds.

"After they had been with us a couple of weeks the boy one day left the ink-roller of the proof-press on the floor. One of the roosters walked over it, and then across a piece of white paper. The foreman saw him, and a great light burst in upon his mind, which nearly stunned him. He slapped his leg with his hand hard enough to break it, and shut his jaws together like a vise to keep from breaking out in a volcano of laughter. He walked to his desk as if in a trance, keeping his eye on Larkway. Before he went home he spoke to the proof-reader and one or two others, and they fractured their legs with their hands; and then they all went off to the hospital for the night.

"The next afternoon they were back at the office two hours before the usual time. The foreman caught one rooster and the proof-reader the other, and they took them over in the corner behind the imposing-

stones. They had previously sent the devil down to Mr. Greeley's room to get a dozen sheets of the paper he always wrote on. These they spread on the floor in the form of a square, carefully inked the feet of the fowls, and set them to fighting on the copy paper. They had just had a meal of cockroaches, and they went at each other savagely. Every two or three minutes the men would take them off, ink the bottoms of their feet, and toss them into the ring again. At the end of twenty minutes every sheet of the paper was covered with their tracks, and the foreman gathered up the pages, numbered them, and scrawled a head on the first one, 'The Plain Duty of Congress,' in imitation of Greeley's hand, marked the whole 'Brevier — Double Lead,' and hung it on the copy-hook.

"Pretty soon the men began to drop in, but they had all heard of the game that was on, and picked around the article. After a while Larkway came lumbering along. He had just made a new pipe out of the biggest ear of corn ever raised in Cayuga County, and a particularly crooked pig's tail from Brattleboro, Vermont, and seemed

unusually pert. He started the conflagration in his pipe, put on his spectacles, and walked to the hook.

"'Hey? You fellers still soldiering, ain't you?' he cried. 'Still afraid of the old man's stuff, hey? Can't rastle it, can you? Had to leave it for old Larkway, didn't you? Well, that's all right; I like it. You do me a favor when you leave it for me.'

"He took it, walked over and slammed it down on his upper case, planted a handful of leads on the bottom of it, and picked up his stick. Every man in the room held his sides, and watched to see the old fossil flabbergasted; but, by the Goddess of Truth, he began to set it!

"Yes, Larkway started to set it. At the end of the second line he began to look a little troubled, laid down his stick, and we thought our moment of victory was come; but he only swore a little, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, refilled it, lit it with a husk stripped from the outside, picked up his stick, and went on. You could have packed every one of us in a hat-box. The old cave-dweller worked on, and never looked up again until he got almost to the bottom of

the last page. Here he stuck, on a place where one of the roosters had slapped down the edge of his wing, also inky. Larkway studied over it for a long time, then he said to the foreman:

"'Darn it, the best of us get hung up on a word once in a while. What's that, down there?'

"'Don't ask me,' said the foreman. 'You know I can't read the stuff. Go down and ask the old man himself.'

Larkway shuffled out with a long face, carrying his pipe in one hand and the copy in the other. He went into the chief's room, and said, in a low tone. 'Mr. Greeley, I'm stuck. What is that word?'

"Greeley snatched the sheet from his hand impatiently, studied it a moment, and then squeaked, in his highest voice:

"'"Unconstitutional," sir! Great Jehoshaphat! it seems to me sometimes as if this office was full of pesky college graduates, and after I've given the janitor strict orders not to allow one of 'em in the building!'"

IV

TALES OF TWO HORSES

"He was a middle-sized man, with black hair, and one o' these here musstashes that curl up at both ends," said Mr. Milo Bush. "Home-made curl, I took it. Said his name was Williams; and he was from the East, but of course he wa'n't to blame fer *that*. We was all willing to do what we could to help him to forget it and make a man of him. This here coming from New York or Boston is a drawback — it's a *drag* on any man — but he can live it down if he really wants to. You may doubt it, but I've seen it done.

"Well, we was helpful to the feller — never asked him what he had to leave the East fer, and planned to try to learn him our ways. We decided that it was our first dooty to learn him to ride. Jim Doty had a bronco named Walking-Beam which we had used on sev'ral occasions before for instructing the Eastern pilgrim. In fact,

Walking-Beam wa'n't used fer anything else, since he was a *little* too tough fer even the boys to *enjoy* riding. We made it a rule never to give a tenderfoot a lesson on Walking-Beam without at least *two* doctors right on the ground; and even then sometimes they didn't get the feller put back together right, though they had been there and seen him shook to pieces and scattered around. Walking-Beam was just the buckingest hoss that ever riz and fell. Why, you might turn him out loose, and s'pose a fly lit on his back. Did he switch his tail or wag around his head? Not much; he just *bucked* that fly off. All the flies in town got so they knowed him, and fit shy of him. Riding him was just like — why, there wa'n't no such *thing* as *riding* him — there was getting on and getting off — mounting and *dis*mounting, and that's all. Riding that hoss consisted in climbing on and regaining consciousness.

"Well, the second morning says Jim to the feller, 'Stranger, might I ask if you're fond of equestrianeous exercise — hossback riding, as we say here?' 'Ye-as,' says Williams, slow like; 'I've rid some. But I un-

derstand that you have these here buckers?' 'We do,' says Jim, turning his honest bloo eyes straight on the feller. 'Many of 'em, I regret to say. It comes through ignorance — they ain't broke right, Mr. Williams. Now I've got a hoss I call Feather Bed. He's a *saddle*-hoss — that's what *he* is. You can *depend* on him. He's *always* the same. His gait — now, see here, I ain't no hand to brag, and I won't say a word about that hoss's *gait*. But if you would like to take him and have a look at our bootiful country this morning, you're more'n welcome. There ain't no better hoss west o' the Missouri River fer looking over the country with,' and he winked at us, meaning, of course, that you got throwed so high that you had a good view.

"The feller seemed pleased, and said he'd be glad of the chance; so Jim went down and saddled up the Beam and led him out. He never had no objections to a *saddle* when there was a prospect that a *man* was going to get on it, so he come along, 'pearing sleepy like. Jim says: 'Here you be, Mr. Williams. If he don't travel just to suit you, *speak* to him.' 'All right, Mr. Doty,'

says Williams, walking up. The doctors pushed to the front, there being a passel of about a hundred of us idjits, and the feller put his foot into the sturrup and swung up on him easy and graceful.

"I'd saw Walking-Beam in a state of eruption before, but I must say I *never* seen him make such a savage start as he did this time. When his back went up it was like the explosion of a powder-mill. And that feller — well, there wa'n't no way of *measuring* how high he *did* go, but if anybody had had their watch out they might of *timed* his fall. But immejitly after he *did* get down you could of knocked us all over with a mint-julep straw. That feller lit on his feet — and where? On the hoss's back! Lit there like a bird. Folded his arms and stood there like a statute. Smiled, and done as he had been told — *spoke* to that living yearthquake — 'Steady, there, boy, steady' — just like that. Well, at first we thought Walking-Beam was too dumfounded to move again; but he wa'n't. He looked up and seen that smiling image on his back, then he just unlimbered and made the effort of *his* life. For ten minutes his motions

just simply jarred the winders in the whole town. And all the time that feller loafing around on his bare back, the saddle having gone up at the first h'ist, and not, so fur as I know, having come down yet. And not satisfied with *standing* there, but he must *dance* a little, and turn a couple o' handsprings, and stand on his head. And then he took out some tobacker and rolled a cigarette, and lit it, and begun to smoke, and to blow *rings* — you may pizen me with ice-water if he didn't. And when the hoss at last fell down from being exhausted, he steps off, and says he to Jim: 'Mr. Doty, that's a fine beast you've got there. Sort of a lady's hoss, I take it. Make a good *fambly* nag;' and he walks over to the hotel.

"Circus man? That's what he was. And it broke up our sport with Walking-Beam too, 'cause when Jim went to him he was stark dead. The doctors held a sort of an otopsy on him, and found his organs all right, so they just reckoned he died of grief and mortification.

"And while we're on the subject of hosses I'll just relate a little pussonal incident about one of 'em," went on Mr. Bush. "You've

heered of Ajax, the celebrated Kentucky runner, of course. I once owned a son of his. I called him Bjax. Fastest hoss ever brought to the Territory. *Too* fast. It would a-been money in my pocket if he'd had only three legs. Where I made my mistake was in not keeping a ball-and-chain fastened to one foot. Ought to a-kept him *hobbled.*

"I bought that hoss Bjax with my hard earnings," he continued, looking off sadly, oblivious of the notorious fact that he had never done a day's work in his life. "Bought him with money which I had *saved.* Money which I had laid up agin the time when I should be *old* and unable to *work.* But it all went, and it has *staid* went, and the hour when I should rest is come, but there is no rest for me. Sometimes, when I'm alone, I say to myself, firm, just like this: 'Keep still, sad heart!'

"Well, I bought this Bjax just to show the boys. They thought they had hosses that could run, but I wanted to show them that their hosses was really *stationary* hosses, rooted down to the spot. I says to 'em, 'I am sending for a *movable* hoss — a

self-propelling hoss — a hoss that goes alone — *not* a animal that has to be warped along with a house-moving windlass, and men putting their shoulders to him and pushing behind.' It took all my savings — the savings of forty years of *toil* — but I got the hoss.

"It was a proud day for me when that hoss come. I took him right over to the track, and I showed 'em that I was right. Bjax *was* fast. He beat every hoss in town. A great igee struck me — to take him around on the fall racing circuit, and make some money and get back my savings. I knew there was nothing in the Territory could keep up with him. My heart beat gayly. Says I, 'Old man, Fortune is at your door, a-taking off her gum shoes and preparing to stay.'

"I had just said this, and also, 'Tell me not in mournful slumbers, life is but an empty dream,' when up steps a well-dressed young man, and says he, 'Sah,' says he, just like that — 'sah, may I have the privilege of admiring your hoss?' 'Wade in, stranger,' says I. He looks over Bjax, his

eyes getting soft and tender, and then I'll be snaked if he didn't bust right out crying. Then he wipes his eyes, and says he: 'Sah, do not laugh at these tears. Them are not tears of weakness. Them tears come from the heart. I am touched,' and he begins to sniffle again. 'I know how it is,' says I, swallering a great lump in my throat. 'Manly tears like them are all O K. You are touched. Lay right down on the ground, young man, and have it out.' 'No, no,' says he; 'it is past. The storm is over. My heart was full, and she overflowed — that was all. Sah, I am a Kentuckian!' 'I'm sorry it is so small,' says I, pulling out my pint flask, 'but you're welcome. Finish it up, and I'll send for some more.' 'No, no,' says he; 'not at present. My emotions even now threaten to overmaster me. Let me simply admire your hoss — your *Kentucky* hoss. An exile from home, cut off from ancestral halls, this is the first Kentucky hoss I've seen for five years. Sah, I am touched.'

"Well, I told him to go ahead and admire till he thought he'd got enough, and

he thanked me, and kept walking round Bjax, and feeling of him, and patting him, and all the time a-saying he was touched. Then he says: 'Sah, would you mind if I mounted your hoss for one turn around the track? Riding was formerly my delight. Fox-hunting was my favorite sport. Will them happy days ever come again? Sah, I have not been so touched since a crool, mistaken father druv me from his door.' 'Hop on,' says I. 'Hop right on.' And he done so, and pranced Bjax round me once or twice, and then galloped off, easy like, down the track; and when he got to the first quarter, he turned round in the saddle, graceful, and waved his hand and threw me a kiss, at the same time lifting the hoss right over the fence, and starting off across the perairie like a bloo streak, and me yelling bloody murder for help. Well, every man that had a hoss started after him, with me follering along on foot, still yelling in a general way; but they might as well a-chased a zigzag of chain-lightning going end over end. They lost sight of the feller and Bjax in twenty minutes. Then they

come back. I was laying on my back on the perairie, my jaw still moving faintly, but little or no yell coming forth. 'Old man,' says somebody, 'wot's the matter?' 'I am touched,' says I."

V

FOG

"You are late," said Judge Crabtree to his nephew, as that young man came into the office, looking wet and bedraggled.

"Got caught by the fog," he answered. "Ferry-boat drifted about, bellowing like a wild bull, pawing up the water, and dodging other boats, also bellowing and pawing."

The Judge leaned back, put his feet on his desk, and held his pen between his thumbs. Then he said:

"Speaking of getting caught in the fog reminds me of when I used to live on Staten Island myself. The only thing that can navigate a Staten Island fog is a Staten Island mosquito. They seem to be waterproof. I have an idea that they oil themselves every day, like a duck. They are also endowed with some sort of fog-penetrating eyes, which make it just as easy for them to move about when it is foggy

as when it is clear. You never see a Staten Island mosquito slowing down to half-speed on account of fog, or hear of one missing his landing on the back of the summer boarder's neck. I once saw a young man steal out of the back basement door during a heavy fog and try to escape them. He was the ex-captain of a college football team. He wore a light fog-colored suit to disguise himself, and ran for the ferry-boat like a frightened wolf. It was only four blocks, but twenty-three mosquitoes made a safe landing on him, and eight others buzzed around his head, nipped at his hat-band, and hummed leisurely away, evidently having dined previously.

"But what I started to tell was a fog story, not a mosquito story. In those days the fogs were heavier than they are now, and they lasted longer. In fact—"

"Judge," interrupted his partner, "is this going to be truth or fiction?"

"Truth," replied the Judge, with decision. "But it will bring home to you as few things can that truth is stranger than fiction. As I was trying to say, the fogs then were heavier than they are now, and they were

THE JUDGE DISCOURSES OF FOG

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a good deal tougher, and had better wearing qualities. In fact, those fogs wouldn't blow away at all, as the present ones will, because the wind couldn't get through them. The only way they were ever dissipated was by its beginning to rain heavily, and sort of washing and melting them away and wearing them out, like rain on a snow-bank. I recollect one morning in the spring that I boarded the boat, as usual, for this city. It was about nine o'clock and extremely foggy. I remember thinking, as I came down the street to the ferry-house, that there seemed to be a faint suggestion of a light cream-colored tint to the fog, and I remarked to a neighbor whom I heard walking near, that it seemed to me as if I were moving about on the bottom crust of an immense custard pie. However, we both got on the boat, or at least I did, and I suppose he did, though I didn't hear anything more of him.

"It was impossible to see a boat's length, and all we could hear was the tolling of the Robbins Reef bell-buoy and the groaning of an occasional whistle with a frog in its throat off in the darkness somewhere.

Then our whistle, also with a frog in its throat, groaned, and we got out of the slip, with a procession of piles on either side gliding back like a line of hurrying ghosts who were afraid of getting their feet wet. After a half-dozen revolutions of the paddle-wheels every man on board might as well have been blind. The captain put deck-hands outside the chains, who reached over the bow and felt out in the fog for ships, islands, continents, and other obstructions; and he stood up forward of the pilot-house himself, and peered straight before him; but he might as well have looked into the coal-bunkers. We were making about half-speed, and after giving the reef a respectful berth, we headed, as we thought, for the city. About every forty seconds our whistle would groan dismally, and we could hear others out in the fog at varying distances taking on in a similar distressed manner.

"We had been out about twenty minutes when a tramp steamer, big and rusty, with the smoke-stack where the flag-staff should have been, loomed up right across our bows. We tried to back, and a peppery little tug, one of those little Skye-terrier tugs which

are always getting in the way, began to ki-yi right under our stern. Then a bark at anchor, the men at the pumps pumping fog out of the hold, rose up on our port, and a hulking lighter with a sail made of sponges bumped into our starboard as it drifted out with the tide. Two or three other craft trod on our toes during the next five minutes, and we passengers just drew in a couple of quarts of fog apiece and held it till the trouble was over. But nothing serious happened. The tramp steamer went up into the fog; the bark went down into the water; the lighter rolled over and went off with its rudder for a sail; and the hot-tempered little tug, after abusing us in screams of steam and defying us in snorts of smoke, went scolding away, looking for a chance to get run over again, and we found ourselves all clear once more. But during the tangle the signal bells in our engine room seemed to be ringing a New Year's chime. I don't think I ever heard so many orders given to an engineer in the same length of time before nor since. But when we got out of the crowd the captain ordered the pilot to bear straight ahead, and

the pilot signalled the engineer ahead at half-speed, and we were off again, and we passengers once more began to inhale regular quantities of fog.

"Now, here comes the marvellous part of this thing. At noon we were still pushing through the fog, with no sight of New York or land. At three o'clock we were still burrowing. When it got dark at seven, as I hope for happiness, we were still at it. But this is not all. As I'm a living sinner, twelve hours later, at seven the next morning, we were still shouldering our way through that everlasting fog, with no glimpse of shore. You may better believe that there was a mad lot of folks on that boat. The crew, from the captain down to the flute-player in the Italian band, who blew fog through his flute till he wore it out, simply raved and tore, while we passengers drowned out the roar of the whistle with foggy imprecations. We abused the ferry company, denounced the weather, and found fault with all animate creation, ending by quarreling among ourselves on politics, religion, and the size of the national debt.

"Since about five o'clock in the afternoon

we had been going at a rate which fairly made us dizzy, as at that hour the captain had got desperate and ordered full speed, and directed the pilot to buzz his wheel around in first one direction and then the other, and get somewhere or anywhere. So all night the engines throbbed and groaned, and the pilot ported his helm, and starboarded his helm, and got his helm by the throat and held it half-way between, and otherwise acted insane. We concluded that we were out in the broad Atlantic, and one scientific passenger began to take observations for the Gulf Stream by jabbing his umbrella over the side and then feeling of it for warm water. Another impressionable man from New Brighton said he saw a flying-fish, and still another thought he scented icebergs.

"But the ocean idea wasn't tenable, after all, because we could still hear the whistles bellowing all around us. But at seven o'clock in the morning, just as the captain was threatening to cut away the rudder entirely and tie an Italian on the safety-valve, the fog lifted, and the difficulty became clear; and it was a simple thing, after all. While

we were tangled up with the other vessels the engineer had got excited, and when signalled to go forward, had lost his head, and started the port paddle-wheel ahead and the starboard paddle-wheel astern; and for twenty-one hours we had been lying there off Bedlow's Island, spinning around like a kitten chasing its own tail."

VI

THE PASSING OF GEN'L JACKSON

We were plowing along through the muddy water of the river at the rate of speed usual to a stern-wheel steamboat when they came and sat down close to me — so close that it was impossible not to hear their conversation. Indeed, they must have known that they were overheard, as the deck was brightly illuminated by the full moon looking down over the flat-topped bluffs.

"I s'pose things are jogging 'long just 'bout the same 'round Poplar Mound, hey?" said the younger of the two.

"Just 'bout. Not much change. Sarah Ann Smead married Ike Patchley's son last spring."

"How is the old man?"

"Old Patchley? Chipper. Give the bride a calf. Rather more than Sarah Ann expected, I reckon. She'd just about been

counting on that old rattle-trap buggy of his'n, I think. Well, the calf up 'n' got a piece of punkin stuck in its throat a week ago, and laid down and just died, so she might better a-got the buggy, if one hind wheel is bigger 'n the other. The old man is just the same. Boun' to stand in with everybody. Going to do the right thing if it kills him. Dunno if he kept a fighting cock when you lived there or not, but he has of late years. That there rooster has been his only relaxation, as you may say. The affection betwixt the old man and that blame', old, long-legged red game-cock was touching to see. They was like brothers, so everybody said. For years them two wa'n't sca'cely separated 'cept nights, and I reckon if the old man *could* a-kept on a roost that he'd a-flew up ev'ry evening alongside o' Gen'ral Jackson. That was the name o' the critter — Gen'ral Jackson. He just had the *longest* legs, and the *reachenest* neck. Clean cut as the ace of spades and a temper like a buzzsaw. And spurs — well, he just walked wide-legged and revolved one spur round the other spur. The old man 'sociated with the rooster so much that he come to

walk just like him. Some folks thought they got so towards the last that they kind o' resembled each other in their faces, and I reckon, on the whole, that the Gen'ral *did* favor the old gent some. You didn't see it in the features so much, but their *expressions* was similar.

"Well, you know how it was with the old man — boun' to do the right thing and be up on soci'ty doings. He heard one day that the new minister was coming, an' he just says to his wife that they'd have him to their house to dinner the first Sunday. His idee was to get ahead of old Johnson's folks. They'd got ahead on the school teacher, and the congressman of the deestrick when he was stumping it, and old Patchley was bound they shouldn't rope in the preacher, too. So when the elder hopped off the stage, Patchley made an app'intment with him for dinner for the very next Sunday.

"Saturday morning the old man shouldered his gun and went out after game for next day's dinner. Well, he didn't have no luck — come back without a thing. Come back late, tired out, plum beat. Hadn't

seen a coon nor a possum, nor even a woodchuck, nor a pa'tridge, nor *nothing*. Hadn't seen a track of one, nor a hide nor hair, nor a feather, nor heard one holler, nor heard no echo of one hollering 'way off somewheres. He sot his gun down with a heavy heart when he got home. But he wa'n't the man to throw up his hand — not much. No, sir! He traveled right down to old Doosnike's market and struck the old man for a roast — on credit — you know old Patchley never was very forehanded. But old Doosnike shook his head. The old man offered to take a chunk of steak, or a boiling piece, or a slice of ham, and finally he got down to liver, but Doosnike wouldn't hear of it — said the old man owed too much already. But Patchley didn't give up — *couldn't*, with that minister just hanging over his head. He went 'round and tackled all his neighbors for a hunk of fresh meat, or a chicken, or *something*. But he owed 'em all, and he didn't get a thing — nothing but cold shoulder. Then he went home and sot down on the end of the leach and bust into tears. His wife come out with the lantern. 'Mariar,' says he, 'the wuss has come

to the wust. Them tears which has wet up the ground all 'round here are the fust I have shed for 40 years — mebby more. Gimme the axe and that lantern — don't stand there like a graven statute!' Then he took 'em and walked away towards the hen-house, where Gen'ral Jackson was a-roosting all alone in state, he being the only fowl the old man had ever took the trouble to keep.

"When he come back to the house he was more calm. 'The deed is done,' says he. 'I would it had been that doggoned preacher's neck instead.' He was so worked up that he kind of talked poetry. 'How old was he, Josh?' asks his wife, beginning to roll up her sleeves. 'He was nine,' answers the old man, 'and never was licked in a fair fight.' 'I think I'd better put him on tonight,' says the old lady; 'that there preacher's jaws don't look to me overly pow'ful.'

"By and by she come back in where the old man was, looking sort of bewildered like. 'Wot is it?' asks he. 'The j'ints,' says she. 'I reckoned to make a pot-pie of him, but them j'ints are like trunk hinges.' 'He

was never licked in a fair fight for nine years,' says the old man, sort of half to hisself. 'Cook him whole, like a turkey, stuffed,' he goes on. 'He can lay on his back, with his legs up — though he never done it afore,' and the old gent groaned. 'Yes, I might do that,' says the old lady; 'only you know our ceiling is low. Them legs won't bend.' By and by the old man looks into the kitchen, and sees the Gen'ral's legs sticking up out of a pot, like young trees just set out. 'I thought you was a-going to bake him, Mariar?' says the old man. 'So I am,' answers she; 'but I'm a-going to bile him three or four hours fust. You go on to bed.'

"When the old man got up in the morning he found his wife still in the kitchen feeding the fire, the Gen'ral's legs sticking out of a crack above the oven door. 'I broiled him a spell after b'iling him,' says she. 'I reckon he's beginning to get tender in spots.' When it was time to go to church the old lady went, but old Patchley stayed at home to mind the fire. It was a sad hour for the old gent, setting there in the shadder of them legs. But he chirped up when his

wife got back, and when the minister come he was as chipper as ever. 'Welcome to our humble roof, elder,' says he. 'You are just in time. Mrs. Patchley is even now bringing in the dinner. Be seated, elder,' and the old man showed the preacher to his place with a great flourish and sot down hisself at the head of the table. Then he turns a little and calls out in a sort of melting voice: 'Mariar, dear, fetch in the pullet!' And she comes in with the Gen'ral on a platter, his legs a-waving and his spurs a-rattling together like a man playing the bones.

"The old lady put down the Gen'ral and then set down herself, and when his legs became quiet the minister asked a blessing. The old man pretended not to notice that the preacher's voice trembled, and begun talking with his regular flourish. 'We hope, elder, that yer fond of poultry meat,' says he. 'Y-a-e-s,' answers the minister, kind of doubtful like. 'Mrs. Patchley and me set great store by it,' goes on the old gent, running his thumb along the edge of the butcher knife. 'Brother Patchley, may I ask the breed of the—the pullet?' says the

preacher. 'She was a Mayflower,' says the old man, reaching up and taking holt of a spur as he begun to saw. 'I reckoned she might a-been a Leghorn,' says the preacher. 'Ha, ha, ha,' says the old man; 'good joke. It is the way my wife has of cooking chicken — with their limbs on 'em. "Chicken *alay* Mrs. Patchley" our friends call it,' and all the time he was grinding away at the leg with one hand like a man turning a corn sheller, and sawing with the other. 'She was well developed for a — a pullet,' says the preacher. 'Yes, it's the breed,' says the old gent. 'They are tall and rangey, but fine eating, remarkably fine eating,' and he was now standing up and grinding and sawing and pulling and yanking like a man rastling with a tame bear. 'Juicy and fine eating, but a difficult breed to raise on account of their tenderness. This here one was a reg'lar fambly pet — had a name — Mollie,' and the old man put his knee agin the table and give a yank like a wild hoss. The j'int busted, and the Gen'ral slipped and flopped a summerset like a bull-frog and gaffed the preacher in the neck with the other spur.

It was too much for the old man and he forgot hisself. 'Hurray,' he yelled. 'Fust blood for the Gen'ral! He's dead, and hain't only one leg, but he knows his business yet! Nine years old, and never was licked in a fair fight! Five to one on Gen'ral Jackson agin the preacher!' and he begun to dance 'round the table and shout for somebody to take the other end of the bet. But the preacher didn't cotton to it a bit, and he got right up and wiped off his neck with his handkerchief, and says he: 'You low wretch, I want no more of your hospertality!' and he took his hat and walked out, leaving the old man ripping 'round like a Injun, offering odds on the Gen'ral. But after a spell he got calmer, and then he laid the whole trouble to the old lady, saying she hadn't cooked the Gen'ral properly."

VII

"THE COLONEL"

The Colonel was by nature playful. Perhaps, too, there was in him a streak of perverseness, if not of actual depravity. Indeed, Aunt Jane asserted boldly that he "took to meanness naturally enough to be a man." But Aunt Jane was prejudiced, the Colonel once having insisted on backing along a country road for a quarter of a mile, pushing the carriage, with Aunt Jane in it, behind him.

That the Colonel was a horse may be inferred. He was, in fact, an "equine horse," as asserted by a travelling book-agent, unmindful of the canon 'gainst a little learning. His standing in the family may also, perhaps, be guessed from his title. He was senior in the line, ranking all the other horses — equine or otherwise. There was a Major, and a Captain, and possibly others; but had any of these been advanced to a

colonelcy, it is positive that the Colonel would have been made a brigadier-general at least. His intelligence and strategic qualities certainly entitled him to his rank. The hand of man was unequal to the production of a device for fastening the stable door which he could not readily open, to let himself either out or in, as desired. He slipped off his halter as one slips off an old glove. Any deficit in his nightly ration of oats meant that he would be found the next morning with his head in the oat-bin, munching in a resigned manner, as much as to say, "This is hard work, but I suppose I must do it." On one occasion, hay not being forthcoming in his manger, he mounted the stairs to the loft, and in the morning stood with his feet on the low sill of the window of the mow, his head poked out into the upper regions as he inspected the landscape and cast an occasional glance at the heavens. For the Colonel a new driver was what the old school reading-books called "rare sport." He would look back over his shoulder as the guileless one mounted to the seat, and almost betray himself with a broad grin. Inside a half-mile he

would develop a case of lameness, which three times out of four would head him for the nearest stable. And on the fourth occasion he would fetch the flinty-hearted driver to book with an internal pain so violent that fierce rolling on the ground could alone bring relief.

But in all of these matters the Colonel was simply humorous and playful. Toward but one class of people did he show real animosity. This was the farm hired man. He kicked at this worthy assistant in season and out of season. Generally speaking, his kicks landed. It was seriously suggested that a sort of a bay window be built just to the rear of his stall, nicely padded and with a bottle of arnica hanging from a string, into which the Colonel could project the unsuspecting agricultural helper.

Naturally pasture fences were the Colonel's derision. He jumped over them if for no other reason than to show that he could jump back again. If the gate was left open, he would neither go through it nor leap the fence, seeming satisfied that his liberties were assured; but if the gate was closed a vault over the fence was necessary

as a visible declaration of independence. The family Boy asserted that he could leap the fence backward. No proof adduced. The same Boy, his imagination made feverish by circus posters, said that he actually saw the Colonel lean sidewise against a board fence and flop over it like a trap-door, or the leaf of a book, or a waffle-iron, his feet describing the arc of a circle, the gyration bringing him up calmly leaning his other side against the opposite side of the fence. Boy sharply reprimanded and sent to bed.

Perhaps the Colonel's most notable achievement was with Uncle Asa, a venerated relative from Providence, R. I. Uncle Asa was a benign personage, and all his ways were ways of pleasantness. He was president of a local Universal Peace Society and a corresponding member of the Philadelphia Brother of Man Association. He was also interested in an orphanage and other good works, and was a charter member of the Providence Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. His only recreation was the collection of postage stamps. Though his collection

was not esteemed large by the fraternity, it would probably, gummed on the face of nature, have covered his State, with perhaps a narrow fringe for neighboring commonwealths.

It has already been hinted that the new driver was always the victim of the Colonel. It should further be explained that while being driven was the Colonel's favorite time for exploiting his peculiar humor. If in double harness, it was his wont occasionally to kick one rear leg over the pole. The experienced driver paid no attention to this, and after a time he would return his leg to its rightful place. Again he would throw his other leg outside the trace, retiring it in due time. On rare occasions, while going down hill, he was known to get one leg over the pole and the other over the trace; but this he seemed himself to think was rather overdoing the thing. Once in a while to kick up both hind feet without losing step with the others was another pastime. To none of these things did the experienced driver pay the least attention. Driven single, his invention was equal to the devising of an entirely new set of gymnastics.

It was Uncle Asa's first meeting with the Colonel. He had expressed a desire to take a little drive, and the Colonel seemed to be the only available horse. The vehicle provided was a low but strong single-seated phaeton. The Colonel looked over his shoulder, as usual suppressing a chuckle, and then they started off.

Matters went on pleasantly enough till they reached a quiet country road where there were no houses or people in sight. Here the Colonel put a leg over one of the shafts, much to the astonishment of Uncle Asa. The philanthropist talked to the military representative and attempted to stop him and alight, but he seemed to prefer to hobble along. By-and-by he took his leg back, at the same time putting his other over the opposite thill. More alarm and remonstrance on the part of the stamp collector, the horse continuing to hitch himself along. Again the horse got all his legs inside the shafts, but immediately began to go lame. Nothing tangible resulting from this he commenced the Aunt Jane plan of backing. Alarm, deepening to consternation on the part of Uncle Asa. He tried

all manner of talk but to no avail. He appealed to the Colonel's sense of honor, reminded him of his title, called upon him in the names of the great "equine horses" of the past; but the Colonel continued to back. Suddenly the representative from Providence became possessed of the notion that the horse might back him over a bank or into a ditch. In a fit of desperation he seized the whip and gave the Colonel a sharp cut. The horse instantly kicked up both rear feet. He was still backing and miscalculated. His feet came down beyond the dash-board and inside the phaeton. The patient Uncle Asa went out backward, something as the Boy had alleged he saw the Colonel flop the fence. The Colonel stopped his backing and tried to extricate his feet. He could not do so. His spinal column was at an exact angle of forty-five degrees. For once in his life he was caught. He ceased to struggle and stood perfectly still. But he felt no more helpless than poor Uncle Asa. This unfortunate sat down on a stump and surveyed the scene before him. The Colonel remained with his nose about six inches from the ground and his tail some

seven feet. It occurred to Uncle Asa that he resembled somewhat a reversed giraffe, and he wondered how he'd look on a postage stamp. Uncle Asa was far beyond his wits' end. There seemed to be nothing to do but wait till an efficient man should come along. So he waited. It was a bad day for efficient men. At the end of an hour and a quarter no man, efficient or otherwise, had appeared. The Colonel seemed to be asleep. Uncle Asa felt that his patience was gone. Taking a note-book from his pocket, he tore out a leaf and hastily wrote his resignation in all the peace and humane societies to which he belonged. Then he rose up and climbed into the phaeton from the rear, picked up the reins, and seized the whip with a firm grasp. The Colonel had observed the resignation-writing out of the tail of his eye. He now saw the whip. He recognized that at last there was but one thing for him — submission. So he walked off on his forward feet, his rear ones continuing to ride in state with Uncle Asa. They made about two miles an hour, and at the end of an hour and thirty minutes came down the main road and turned

up the lane to the house, observed of all available observers.

In good time the Colonel passed away, full of years if not absolutely overflowing with honors. He had reached the age of twenty-four. He died, as befitted his character, beyond the confines of the stable and outside the pale of the pasture fence. He had done what he had never done before, broken the top board of the fence in setting forth his last declaration of independence. Perhaps it also broke his heart. We wrote the intelligence to Uncle Asa. Instead of sending his sympathy, like a Christian, he sent his congratulations.

VIII

PUBLIC DEBATE

"These here two fellers, old Waldo and Jarley McCracken, would always argue," said Mr. Milo Bush one day while in Shanks's grocery-store. "Argue about anything. Took contrary sides on *every* question. Why, if old Waldo said that Injuns was pizen, Jarley McCracken would up and dispute it, just as if the whole world don't know that Injuns *are* pizen, and ought to be exterminated off the face of the yearth.

"One day Jarley McCracken was speaking of whiskey, and happened to mention, keerless like, its *food* value, and what did old Waldo do but up and dispute it. Said whiskey as a beverage to supply the necessary liquid for the proper aswimulation of the solid food was all O K, but he denied its value as a food *per se* — them was his furren words, just like that — *per se*. It was the general view that if he couldn't make out his case without dragging in French, that he'd better keep still.

"Another time they got arguing about great men. Old Waldo said that Napoleon was a greater man than Dan'l Webster. Jarley McCracken of course said it was no such stuff. Shanks was just closing up, so we all went over to the schoolhouse and organized a regular meeting, and let 'em debate percisely 's if they'd been in Congress, with Doc Ballister for the referee, just like the Senate.

"Old Waldo led off on the Napoleon side. Fust, says he, let us make a inquiry into what constitoots troo greatness. Is it words, or is it acts? Is it talk, or is it get-up-and-get? The igee of the present speaker is that it is acts. Here we find the difference between the two men — Napoleon done things, but the alleged fame of Dan'l Webster rests wholly on words. Consider the familiar motto of Napoleon [here Mr. Bush consulted a well-worn note-book], '*Honey soyt qui mall why pense*,' which, for the benefit of those present who do not understand Greek, *if any there be*, I may translate, 'If you are going to do a thing, do it.' Of course Dan'l Webster's Dictionary was a great book. Present speaker had

heard it said that it weighs ten pounds. But Napoleon fired cannon-balls which weighed a hundred pounds. A copy of Webster's Dictionary would scarcely have made wadding for one of Napoleon's cannons. Napoleon was a great man, take him as you will. See how he spiked the enemy's fire-engines before he applied the torch to Moscow! Even in defeat Napoleon Bunnyparte was great. Beaten back by overwhelming numbers at Waterloo, did he throw up the sponge? Hardly! When his charger was shot from under him, leaving him in the air hanging to the limb of a tree with one hand, he cried, 'My kingdom for a hoss — lay on McDuff!' Napoleon Bunnyparte faced the enemy to the last. When they come they had to saw off the limb to get him down, like a hornets' nest. That's what Napoleon *was* — a hornets' nest on two legs. Then old Waldo set down, and Jarley McCracken got up.

"Fust, he said, he reckoned that if Napoleon had been what he is cracked up to be, that he'd a-had an extra hoss along for his a-de-kamp to lead under him. However, it was not necessary to belittle Napoleon in

order to enlarge Dan'l Webster. As the great Henry Clay had said of Webster, 'There he stands — look at him!' The present speaker denied that Dan'l Webster did nothing but compile the great dictionary which bears his name. He was a statesman as well as a leximographer. Who stood on the top of Bunker Hill Monument and uttered these words, 'Gentlemen, give me liberty or give me death'? And if they'd shot the monument from under him, he'd a-hung to a star — a star, I say, and still put up a stiff fight for blessed liberty. The dictionary was a side issue, compiled on rainy days when he couldn't work. When he thought of a new word he wrote it down on his cuff or somewhere, and when he got home socked it into his dictionary. So it grew. Did Napoleon do any such thing? No! Napoleon simply set around straddle of a hoss about four sizes too big for him, and had his picture took. He was better at facing the muzzle of the camera than he was the muzzle of the cannon. If Daniel Webster's legs had been no more than eighteen inches long, he'd have known

enough to have kept off big draught-hosses.

"Right here old Waldo couldn't stand it no longer to hear Napoleon abused. He hopped up, grabbed the big school globe, and banged Jarley McCracken with it. His head crashed through the South Pacific Ocean, and his nose busted out in the northern part of England. It made Jarley McCracken pretty mad, and he bunted old Waldo, his head still in the bowels of the yearth. The coast of Norway caught old Waldo on the chin, and they both went down in a heap. The yearth all busted to flinders, and chunks of the arctic regions and North America went flying through the air. Doc Ballister jumped in and parted them, and we went home.

"But lemme tell you they wa'n't the only good debaters we ever had here. There was Abe Whydell. He'd argue with you 'bout anything, and he'd do it with both hands, too. That was Abe's style — bare knuckles. Marquis of Queensburrow rules or none a-tall, just as you preferred. I will say this, that Abe Whydell was the

fightin'est man that ever lived in *these* parts — that's what *he* was."

"Wasn't afraid of anything, eh?" suggested somebody.

"Afraid? Abe Whydell afraid? Now look here; do you want to *know* about Abe Whydell? Do you want to have his character made *clear* to you? Do you want to feel that you've knowed him *yourself*, and 'sociated with him, and had *business* relations with him, and *lived* with him, and felt towards him like a *brother?*"

"I — I think so."

"Then see here: Abe Whydell would fight a rattlesnake and give the snake the first bite. He fit because he *loved* it. His *heart* was in it. He throwed his whole *soul* into it. Says a Boston man that seen him clean out a sheriff's posse that had been posseing after him two days — says the Boston chap to me, 'That feller ain't no billytantee; he's a perfessional — that's what *he* is.' Which is what I say, too.

"Not that Abe Whydell was a quarrelsome man — fur from it. I think I may say deliber'tly, hefting each word as I use it, that Abe Whydell was the peaceablest man I

ever knowed. That's what he fit fer — peace. Where there was trouble, there you would find Abe Whydell putting up his dukes for peace. That was his watchword — peace. Many's the time I've saw him, when there was a fight, snatch up a wooden-bottomed chair, and as he waded in yell out, 'Gentlemen, wot I want is peace, and durned little of that!'

"Well, things run on, and finally Abe Whydell had licked everybody in town. Natur'ly this had a bad effect on him. He begun to get proud and stuck up. This wa'n't to be wondered at — it's reg'lar human nat're, and Abe did have human nat're about him. He was head and shoulders and *some* back above his feller-men, but he were human, after all. So he begun to get haughty and overbearing, and when you asked him to have a drink, mebby he'd do it, and mebby he'd say he wasn't thirsty. Think of it, wasn't *thirsty* — couldn't make up a *reasonable* excuse and let the man down easy, but must rip out the most insulting and impossible thing he could — wasn't *thirsty* — just as if a man says to you, 'How balmy the air is this morning,' and you

should snap back at him, 'I don't know; I ain't breathing this morning.'

"Well, as I said, Abe kept wearing his nose higher and higher, just like Napoleon Bunnyparte, and we seen that fer his own good he'd got to be took down. We held a public meeting and talked it over, and the best we could see was to send right to New York and get an A1 prize-fighter to come on and whale the conceit out of him. I was the committee ap'pinted to graft the letter. It went like this:

"'*Post-master, New York:*

"'DEAR COLONEL,—We've got a bad man in this town. For a private citizen we jedge him the worst man that ever looked through a shirt collar. He has walloped us all. He finished the last man two weeks ago, and has begun to go round again. Now what we want is the best fighter in your town to come out here and pound this man. We want a thorough job done, and are willing to pay the market price. We've got the money, because the City Free Library Association has disbanded, after voting to use the funds on hand fer this

purpose. We would prefer a man from around Five Points somewheres, as we hear that they are intelligent, reliable citizens, and understand the upper cut. Don't send no man that has ever been convicted of any crime, nor a furriner. We believe in America fer the Americans. No Irish need apply. The Chinese must go.

"'Yours truly,

"'SECRETARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.'

"That's just the letter we sent, except that, after it had been read and approved of, I slipped in one of these here little gable-end marks after 'walloped us all,' and wrote up above the line, 'except the Honorable Milo Bush, Esq.'

"It was some time before we heard anything, then we got a letter from a man signing himself Maguire, saying as how the post-master was so busy with official dooties that the matter had been turned over to him. He said he had a good man, champion heavy-weight of the Sixth Ward, that would come out and do the job fer $300 and expenses. We held another meeting to get the best sense of the community, and decided to have him come on.

"The stage he arrove on got in at nine o'clock in the evening. We looked him over, and found him about Abe's size and general build. We'd been hoping he would be bigger. Some said he couldn't do it, and that Abe would just do him up as he had the rest of us. But the man said we could depend on his science, and we hoped we could. We decided to app'int a committee to wait on Abe and lay the matter before him. Nobody seemed anxious to serve on this, so we writ a letter and sent it by a stranger who happened to be in town, telling him it was a propersition to tender Abe a reception and give him a gold-headed cane. This stranger wa'n't in no fit shape to make an intelligent report when he got back, but after the doctor finished working over him, as near as we could make out, Abe accepted the challenge. You see, he had got out of bed and fell on the stranger 'cause he was proposing to stir up strife with his letter. Always fer peace, Abe was.

"The next morning at sunup we staked out a ring back of the Methodist church. The man sot down on a box at one side, wrapped in a hoss-blanket, and soon Abe

come along. The seconds was arranged fer, and Abe took off his coat, and the two of 'em stepped into the ring. The next minute we was the sickest crowd in the Territory. There never was no fight in *that* ring," and Mr. Bush paused sadly.

"Why?"

"It was this way: They stepped into the ring, just like this. Then they looked at each other, like this. Then says the man, 'Heavings, is it possible that's Abe!' 'It are, Jim, it are!' says Abe. Then they rushes up and throws their arms round each other, like this, and burrows their heads down in each other's necks, and just reg'-larly bust out crying. Long lost brothers, you see. *Twin* brothers, too. Hadn't seen each other fer fifteen years. And there they stood and cried, and moaned, and sobbed, and took on, with the tears a-running down on the ground and making it so slippery that they couldn't a-fit if they'd wanted to, not without spikes in their shoes. Then the rest of us caught it, seeing them two strong men standing there braced, weeping and wailing and blubbering 'bout the old home, and their sainted mother, and their

angel sister, and their brother that was hung, and all such; and you may snatch me baldheaded if there was a dry eye at the ring-side. And as we stood there wringing each other's hands and boohooing, and trying to find somebody in the crowd that had a handkerchief, suddenly them two men stopped, and sort of mopped off their tears, and turned round, and says Abe, 'Jim, let's wade in together and lick the crowd — every *one* of 'em — not leave no sound man *a-tall*.' 'All right, Abe,' says Jim. And I *never* seen such a scattering. Every last man there, except me, run like a cat in a dog-show; and them two fellers didn't *catch* me; I run as fast as was really *necessary*."

IX

BUDSTART'S PECULIAR ELECTION

"Speaking of election," said the Judge (the divine had been holding forth for five minutes on the subject of predestination) —"speaking of election reminds me of a case of it which I saw out in Dakota a dozen years ago. It was at the November election, and —" He stopped as the astonished gaze of the clergyman rested upon him.

"Judge," said the Doctor, slowly, "if I ever saw a story dragged in by the ears, then that is what you are now doing."

The Judge laughed good-humoredly, but whether he was amused or did it to gain courage it was impossible to say.

"Well, Doctor, I think it is better to drag in a story by the ears than to pop up through the floor with one, like the clown in the Christmas pantomime. I hold that the transition from the subject of foreordination to a Territorial election reminiscence, though violent, is legitimate, and I shall go

on, even at the risk of precipitating a recount on my own future election.

"It was about 1883 that a callow young man named Budstart went out to Running Horse, Dakota, and started a newspaper. His fitness for the post of editor was not particularly apparent; but in those days many things in the Territory were not particularly apparent, and of no class of phenomena was this more often the case than that of the position in which men were found. Budstart called his paper the *Running Horse Palladium.*

"The motto of the *Palladium* was, 'Hew to the Line, let the Chips fall where they may,' though the only hewing Budstart did for a long time was to edit nonpareil final-proof notices and write the local news. The chips seemed to hit nobody, and, for all the public knew, he may have hewn considerably beyond the line. But in course of time there came the inevitable county-seat fight, and then Budstart seized the axe in both hands, and turned the *Palladium* into a very chip volcano. This he accomplished by systematically and vigorously abusing and vilifying every man in the rival town of

Diana, and especially the editor of the Diana *Prairie Blast,* a portly personage much given to writing obituaries which ended with a cloud-burst of mortuary grief. Budstart called him the Weeping-Willow.

"I'm sure the editor of the *Prairie Blast* would have been delighted to write the obituary of Budstart, but Budstart refused to die. The campaign was a particularly hot one. The candidates were largely lost sight of in the struggle over the county capital. This important adjunct of a free people was situated out on the prairie, at the site of a deserted village popularly called Ghost Town. The court-house was a small square structure which, tradition said (and tradition, you know, was young), had originally been a chicken-coop. The election would take this building, together with the name and fame of county capital, to either Diana or Running Horse, whichever got the majority of the votes cast.

"In those days in the Territories party lines were obliterated by sectional lines, especially when a county-seat struggle was on hand, as was generally the case. It was certain that Running Horse would hold a

convention and nominate a ticket composed exclusively of Running Horses, so to say, or sympathizers with Running Horse, and that Diana would hold another convention and put forward a ticket of Dianaites, or partisans of Diana. Six weeks before the day of election Running Horse carried out her part of the programme, and presented what the *Palladium* called a 'thoroughly good ticket, strictly unpartisan, and composed of high-minded and honorable business men having the best interests of Sitting Bull County at heart,' which was made up wholly of men living either in Running Horse or within a few miles of that place. Among the latter was one 'Doc' Hadley, who was proposed for the office of coroner, to succeed himself.

"Doc Hadley had, in fact, held the office since the organization of the county, and it was looked upon as belonging to him for life. Certainly there wasn't another man in the county who could have been induced to take the office, for the melancholy fact was that in the whole four years the Doctor had never had a case, and, a coroner being paid exclusively by fees, you can easily esti-

mate the value of the office. It was a peaceable county, and violent deaths were unknown. Occasional misunderstandings occurred, and once in a while the cheering bang of one gentleman shooting at another gentleman would reach the coroner's ears and bring momentary encouragement; but the gentleman's aim always proved to be poor, and so nothing ever came of it. Month after month people would insist on dying in a perfectly regular way, with the aid of a physician and surrounded by friends, and so the office of coroner remained utterly barren.

"Of course I can't deny that sinister and sarcastic folks used to insist that the death of every man or woman treated by Doc Hadley in his professional capacity ought to have been investigated by him in his official person. From which you may gather that the Doctor did not have the confidence of the people. He lived five or six miles out of town, on a sheep-ranch — sheep-ranching, in fact, being his main business. He wasn't a regularly educated physician, by any means, having got his entire knowledge of medicine from a certain aged grand-

mother, who lived to one hundred and one years, thanks to the curative, strengthening, preserving, and prolonging virtues of the black-cat-skin poultice, made on the hide side, cat to be killed in the dark of the moon. Doc clung consistently to the teachings of his ancient ancestor. Of course he used boneset, wormwood, tansy, and one or two other simples to a certain extent, nor did he wholly scorn a few such 'boughten' sedatives as nux-vomica, belladonna, and aconite; but chiefly he stuck to the black-cat-skin poultice, carefully laid on the side opposite to the fur of an animal which had been slaughtered in the auspicious hour of the moon's greatest obscurity. He was a grizzly man of few words, and when in town was much given to peering up alleys and gazing into back yards, probably looking for likely cats; and he habitually wore a pair of leather trousers, which many conjectured were made from the foundations of past poultices.

"Diana did not hold her convention till some two weeks after that of Running Horse, and in this interval young Budstart bent his whole energies to abusing the peo-

ple of the former place. The Weeping-Willow replied as best he could by abusing the people of Running Horse, but he didn't command the wealth of choice invective possessed by Budstart. If one was a weeping-willow, the other was a bramble-bush. But nothing happened to change the office of coroner from a laughing-stock, and it would have been a direct insult to offer it to any other man in the county.

"This, of course, was the precise reason why, when they held their convention, the men of Diana offered it to Budstart, or, rather, why they simply put his name on their ticket without consulting him about it at all. The convention even passed a long and exceedingly solemn resolution on the subject of the coronership, asserting that Doc Hadley was worn out by attending to its arduous duties, that new blood was needed in the office, and that, throwing all sectional prejudice to the four winds, they called upon the intelligent voters of Sitting Bull to support for coroner the one man to whom the unerring finger of fate pointed, namely, Rufus Henry Budstart, of Running Horse. The *Prairie Blast* devoted a col-

umn to the choice, predicting a brilliant future for the office in the hands of its esteemed and intelligent contemporary, ending by advising him to get a pair of catskin trousers and take the stump in person.

"The consternation of Budstart was extreme. But he knew that it would be useless to protest, so he settled down to endure as best he could the glee of the Weeping-Willow and the calls of his friends to congratulate him solemnly on his prospects. But it took half the snap out of his abuse of Diana. The most serious feature, however, was when Doc Hadley heard of how matters stood, and hurried to town. The Doctor was in a very earnest frame of mind, and taking his professional eye from the productive back yard and the teeming alley, he freely charged that however much Budstart might protest that he did not want the nomination, he had, in point of fact, worked for it tooth and nail. Further, the indignant Doctor charged that Budstart had been bought off in this way by Diana, and pointed to the lessening viciousness of his abuse in confirmation of this view. Then he stood on the opposite side of the street,

shook his fist at the *Palladium* office, and shouted: 'He's a traitor, and he's trying to take the bread out of the mouth of the faithfulest coroner any county ever had. I'd like to get a cat-skin poultice onto him once; I'd fix him!'

"As election drew near, the coroner candidates were gradually lost sight of in the struggle for the county-seat, and when the day actually came Budstart's friends at Running Horse, casting the straight ticket, all voted against him, while his enemies at Diana, to a man, voted for him. There was a polling-place at Running Horse, and another at Diana, each, of course, in charge of 'home talent.' It was feared at Running Horse that Diana might muster the most voters, so, to neutralize this, and at the same time forever to crush the unscrupulous ring which was known to exist there, the crafty political managers at Running Horse resorted to political stratagem. In some unknown way they got an old Louisville city directory for 1872, and they freely voted the names of three or four hundred of the best citizens of that place. This swelled the votes of Running Horse to

something above the actual population, but it was considered a legitimate device to place the county-seat where it belonged, and to rebuke the criminal ring. The cry all day was, 'Down the Diana machine!'

"It was a hushed and solemn hour when the citizens of Running Horse assembled that evening in the office of the *Palladium* to await the returns from Diana. They sat about on the chairs, boxes, and even the floor; leaned against the wall, type-cases, the Washington hand-press, and anything which promised to support a weary political worker who had done what he could to rebuke dishonesty at Diana. About nine o'clock a messenger rode up. He entered, and announced that Diana had polled about two hundred more votes than Running Horse. The sturdy reformers were too disgusted even to swear. They simply sat or leaned where they were and thought. At last the silence was broken by Budstart, who jumped up and exclaimed, 'Great heavens! then I'm elected coroner!'

"'Yes,' said the messenger; 'you went through at Diana even with your ticket. We've lost the county-seat, but we've got

the coronership.' This helped to restore good-nature, and three cheers were given for Coroner Budstart, while Doc Hadley slunk away."

"Is that all?" asked the Doctor.

"Well," answered the Judge, "as a matter of record I may add that Budstart refused the office, to the great apparent grief of the Weeping-Willow, and the county commissioners appointed the worthy Hadley, which was more soothing to his perturbed spirit than any cat-skin could have been. By-the-way, Doctor, you are a member of the Reform Club, are you not?"

"I am," replied the Doctor.

"Then I ought also to add, as a contribution to your stock of knowledge about reform, anti-machine politics, and general purity of government, that it came out a few months later that Diana had used on election day an old Montreal directory, and Montreal being a larger place than Louisville, she had of course won."

X

THE LONG-SUFFERING SCANDINAVIAN

"Talk about turning the other cheek when a man welts you on one, as I read of doing in a newspaper once," observed Mr. Milo Bush, with both a philosophical and a reminiscent note in his voice, "it don't count with me since I knowed that there Ole Oleson. That there Ole Oleson would not only *turn* the other cheek, but he would walk around and get it in just the posish you needed for giving him another all-fired old smite; and mebby if you was short, and he being uncommon tall, he would scrunch down a little and give you all the show in the world; and then ask you if you wouldn't like to begin all over again, or if he shouldn't drop around every morning at eight o'clock and let you take your whack reg'lar. It seemed just as if he *knowed* that the town was hard up for fun, and just made up his mind to let the boys have all the good, square, honest sport with him

that they wanted to. And then in the end it come out that he had no gratitude.

"You see, this yere Ole Oleson struck town in May. The first thing he done was to walk into Hi Labbett's grocery, and says he, 'Meester, aye tank aye vants to geet a yob'—that's the way he talked, the poor miserable furrener; never opened his jaws without sp'iling a mouthful of good English. 'Jus' set yourself on the counter there—a man's coming in here in 'bout a nour looking for somebody to work on his ranch,' says Labbett, and he p'inted to a place where the boys had a little sort of a needle-jabbing dufunny rigged up. It worked with a string, and when you pulled the string the man that sot in that place got jabbed. Well, Ole sot there, and the boys come in, and Joe Millikan, as Mayor of the town, yanked the string first. Did Ole get mad? Not much! He just got up quick like, and says he, in his busted English, 'Aye tanks there bees a yabber there that yabs pretty good,' with a grin that showed more'n ten dozen teeth. Then you may shoot me with a Gattelling gun if he didn't set back down in the same place; and Pete

Barker, being a alderman, worked the string, follered by Jedge Longsdorf, and Cap'n Sarcey, and miscerlaneous cit'zens. And he a-setting there and a-grinning, and a-saying once in a while, in his outlandish English, 'Aye tank you fallers bees trying to play some yokes on von Swedeman.' I *never* seen anything like it. And just remember that he was over six feet tall and well-proportioned, and mebby 'bout twenty-three years old. But there he sot, murdering the best language on this yere green yearth.

"Well, that will give you an igee of what the feller was. You couldn't get him mad noways — least it 'peared that way. The boys used to put him on the buckin'est broncos to ride, and give him the kickin'est guns to shoot, and tramp him round dark corners where was sot the snappin'est b'ar-traps. But all the time that Norsk was good-natured as a p'inter dog, a-smiling and a-trying to let on he could talk our language, though he oughter a-seen it were too many for him.

"Even when the sport got a little rough he stood it just the same. One day Jedge

Longsdorf took a little too much — don't think the Jedge was a hard drinker, 'cause he wa'n't; he was a *very* mod'rate drinker; *never* took anything stronger than whiskey — one day Jedge Longsdorf got b'iling, pitched into Ole, and pounded away at him till he was tired; but I'll be hanged if the feller didn't take even *this* all in good part. 'Aye tank the Yudge he bees feeling pretty good to-day,' says he to me, telling me of it, with his face all bunged up. 'Yust see how he yumped on von Swedeman. Haw, haw, haw!' I were too disgusted to speak. The Jedge done the same thing dooring the month of June four or five times.

"When Fourth of July come we decided to give up the usual celebration, and jus' have fun with Ole. So we kep' it up pretty hot all day, putting fire-crackers in his pockets, and shooting holes through his hat, and all such jokes. He took it just like he had everything else — a-smiling and a-chewing away at our bootiful language. The Jedge went slow on liquors, as usual, being, as I said, what I have heered called an absteamerous man, and it were along in the afternoon before he got reg'larly b'iling; but

when he did, he took a few passes at Ole, though we discouraged it, not wanting to help along nothing that was in bad taste. The day closed up all O K, and we planned to send Ole up on the flat roof of Tom Griswold's supply store, and have some evening fun at shooting fireworks at him. We got him up some way — I disremember how — and then we snaked away the ladder and popped it to him. It looked 'sif it was going to be the best joke ever played in Bon Pierre County. First we touched him up with roarman candles, then we plugged him with rockets, then we lit pin-wheels and throwed 'em up, and let him rastle with 'em jus' as he seen fit. Young man, you've heern tell of how even the worm will turn over, being, as I take it, that he can bite better in that posish. Well, that's what that Norsk done. He turned over on us, and showed that he was ungrateful after all we had done to learn him our manners and customs, and get him so he could talk English right, like we done ourselves. How'd he go at it? Slid down the eaves-spout right amongst us, where we stood blazing away at him. Then the mask of his good-

nature dropped off, as I may say, and we seen what a rep-*tile* we had been harboring in our buzzums."

Mr. Bush pushed away his upper lip and showed the lack of two important teeth. "Did Ole hit me?" he continued, with warmth. "Did he *hit* me? Young man, don't you see I'm *alive?* Ain't I before you in the flesh? No, sir; it was Jedge Longsdorf that hit me; but Ole hit the Jedge. It was a carom shot, too, because after Ole played on the Jedge, the Jedge struck agin Joe Millikan and bounded off and struck me. It busted those teeth and pocketed me in a ditch. I was out of the rest of the game. What become of the Jedge and Joe? Young feller, what become of the man that went out to shake hands with the cyclone? Where's the man that went up, whistling along, with his hands in his pockets, and stuck his nose into the muzzle of the active volcano? My young friend, I jus' laid in that ditch and pertended I was dead, so he wouldn't pay no more attention to me. It wa'n't hard to pertend. The boys closed in on him, and he jus' straightened up and got in some massé shots on

'em — though they ought to have been barred. He used a new cue-ball every time, and pocketed at least one man in the ditch at each shot. Then for a change he begun to play that his arm was a hammer, and ev'ry time he brought a fist like a pile-driver down on a man it drove him a foot into the ground — or it would if the man had been stiff enough, which he wasn't often, though gener'ly he was soon after. In five minutes Ole Oleson was the only man in the street except us in the ditch, all letting on we was dead, and most of us wishing we was. Then says he, in his sickening broken English, says he, 'Aye tank von Swedeman he have a leetle Fort-a-Yuly heemself,' and he walked away, and after some time such of us as could make the riffle crawled out of the ditch. Young man, my *hope*, and I reckon I may say my *prayer*, ever since has been that I may never again have any truck with an ungrateful man, nor one that can't talk good English."

XI

THE UNFORTUNATE TOWN OF BLUEBLOSSOM.

Of all the peripatetic laborers in the typographical field that I ever knew — and my acquaintance among them has not been small — certainly the most entertaining was Mr. Mark Wallis. In some respects he reversed all established facts of human nature. In his normal condition — that is, when under the moderate influence of liquor — he was reserved, almost taciturn, and worked steadily at his case; but when sober, as would happen Friday night after a long stretch at "making up" and printing the paper, he would relapse into a vein of mellow reminiscence which showed his encounters with people and things to have been extensive, not to say extraordinary. One night he said:

"The most unfortunate town I ever worked in was Blueblossom. A day on which it didn't have a fire it would have a cyclone, and all the neighboring towns

shipped their tramps and cats there regularly. A car-load of these commodities would arrive nearly every night from some point. As a protection against fire the people bored an artesian well. The well flooded the town and wrecked twenty houses. They plugged up the well, and that night the post-office burned down. Blueblossom was the Niobe of towns.

"Still, there was nothing pliable about Blueblossom's upper lip; she boomed herself like other new Territorial towns, or tried to at least, though with Nemesis running close behind all day, and camping on her trail at night, Blueblossom couldn't do much. Her people prided themselves on her permanency and stability. The editor of the *Blueblossom Humming-Bird*, for whom I worked, one day wrote an item saying that 'Blueblossom is not a mushroom town put up on wind, but a substantial municipality, showing, especially in the buildings, its solidity and permanency.' He stopped and said to me: 'Mr. Wallis, go and drive that confounded stray hog out from under the house. He's scratching his blamed back on the floor joists and shaking

the building so I can't write.' Those wandering hogs got under the Methodist church, rooted away the foundation, and allowed the structure to topple over, and the wind rolled it away like a tumbleweed. A rival town stole the court-house. Cyclones got the outskirts, fire the business district, and the well the residence portion. The day I started away but one building, a small real-estate office, remained. When I went over the hill I looked back, and, as I live to tell it, a stray steer stuck his head through a window of this, got his horns caught, and ran off pell-mell across the prairie with it on his head.

"But what I started to tell you about was Blueblossom's Fourth-of-July celebration. Of course it was doomed to failure, like everything else there. Even their Christmas trees failed. A hornet's nest thawed out of the first one and the people left with great haste; and on the second one the labels became all mixed up, and Grandpa Sommers got a pair of roller-skates and a rattlebox, Baby Brown a shot-gun, and so on; and finally the whole thing broke up in a row. But the memories of the Blueblos-

som failures which well up in my bosom are so numerous that I become garrulous.

"On the occasion of this Independence-day celebration the first untoward event was the explosion of the cannon; but the Fourth-of-July cannon usually does explode, so this need not cause remark. The most important thing on the programme of the day was the oration by the Honorable Medary Buzzell, candidate for Territorial Delegate in Congress. He arrived on an early train, and was escorted to the hotel. Three citizens soon waited on him, and informed him that they were a committee sent by the General Celebration Committee of Fifty on a delicate but important mission. 'We hope,' said the leader, 'that you will receive us in the spirit in which we come. We have a weighty matter to discuss with you, but when we explain the situation we are sure you will admit that we are fully justified.'

"'State the cause whereby I am thus honored with your presence,' said the gentleman, pompously.

"'Well,' said the man, 'it is this way: There are a number of Englishmen living

near here, younger sons, poor relations, and similar family débris, who have been sent out here to learn how to farm by playing football in the pasture and chasing foxes on the wheat land. They have money, and are good customers of the town. But last year the orator, as is usual with Fourth-of-July speakers, handled the British lion pretty roughly — in fact, he fairly twisted his tail — and it made these Englishmen angry, and they threaten, if the thing is repeated this year, that they will go to a rival town to do their business — buy their cricket bats, hunting-saddles, and other agricultural implements. We are hoping that you haven't anything in your speech against the lion, Mr. Buzzell?'

"'Gentlemen,' said Buzzell, 'I am sorry to disappoint you, but there *is* a great deal in my speech about the lion, and I take one or two stabs at the unicorn. As for twisting the former's tail, I twist it off, and then beat the despicable creature with the bushy end of it till he lies on his back and begs with his poor dumb paws for mercy.'

"'But can't you cut it out?' asked the man.

"'Possibly; I'll try. I can enlarge on the slavery idea, and talk about Appomattox, and —'

"'Hold on,' said the man; 'that's another point that we were delegated to speak to you about. There are a number of Missourians in town, and a few Texans, brought here by the stock interests, all good loyal citizens, and leading men in the community — Major Foster, of the Confederate army, is our county attorney — but of course they wouldn't like it to hear the lost cause abused — genuinely vilified — in your remarks.'

"'Well,' said the orator, 'I don't see how I can help it and give the necessary snap to my speech, with our hereditary Fourth-of-July enemy, the British lion, barred. You see, that wouldn't leave me anything but Mexico.'

"'That's another point we were to see you about. Not a word against Mexico. Colonel Vallejo, the largest stock-owner here, is a Mexican. He owns the very grove where you are going to speak, and he's pretty sensitive. We don't think you'd better so much as mention Mexico.'

"'Will you please tell me what I *am* going to talk about, and make an acceptable Fourth-of-July speech?'

"'Can't you just let the eagle scream?'

"'But, my dear sir, the eagle has got to scream *at* something to be effective on the Fourth of July. The Fourth-of-July eagle is not a bird which screams simply to hear himself scream. He must know he is scaring somebody, or he is silent.'

"'That occurred to us,' admitted the man, 'before we came in. I don't know as it will be of any use to you, but an idea struck us, which you can use if you like. There are the Indians — abuse them.'

"The honorable gentleman was becoming somewhat warmed up by this time, and he said, 'You are quite sure they wouldn't be offended, and buy their war-paint and ghost-dancing pumps elsewhere?'

"'Oh yes,' answered the man. 'You'll pardon us for speaking as we have, but so many things have happened to the town that we didn't feel that it could stand much more. Only yesterday our high-school building fell down, and a freight train smashed the railroad depot; and already to-

day the cannon has burst, and the artesian well broken out again and flooded the race-track, so we can't have any of the trials of speed which are on the programme. Abuse the Indian all you want to; and if you would care to take a shy at the Chinese too, just go ahead.'

"Well, the upshot of it was that the Honorable Mr. Buzzell refused to deliver any address at all; but of course it didn't make the least difference, as the idea that they could have a celebration at Blueblossom was absurd from the first. An attempt was made to give what the programme called the 'Sports of the Populace,' but a leading citizen fell and broke his leg in the foot-race, and when the Committee on Greased Pig carefully lubricated their animal, and turned him loose to become the property of the man who could catch him, he only grunted, and began rooting among some gumweeds, refusing to run an inch.

"They had even worse luck with that other standard greased preparation of the small-town celebration. The chairman of the Committee on Glee Club and Greased Pole was a local humorist named Verbeck. He restrained himself while helping get the

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT OF THE GREASED PIG

singers together, but gave his exuberant fancy full range on the pole. Instead of nailing the usual pocket-book containing $2 on top, and greasing the pole the whole length, he covered the last four feet with a most villanously sticky substance, and the Mayor, who succeeded in climbing the pole, stuck at the top all the afternoon, including the time of the thunder-shower, which of course came up and ended the dismal proceedings."

"Isn't that a pretty stiff detail — the Mayor's climbing the greased pole for $2?" I asked.

"The truth about Blueblossom is always stiff. He didn't climb the pole for the $2, but because the county judge 'dared' him. The Mayor was going to donate the money to the Episcopal Church Society, but while he was sticking to the pole the lightning struck the church steeple and burned the building, so it didn't make any difference. I don't know how long the Mayor staid up there, but I noticed him on the street the next day. Poor Blueblossom, I was glad when I saw the last building tearing away on that steer, and knew the place was out of its misery at last."

XII

THE JUDGE'S BURGLAR

Judge Crabtree, having that day succeeded in collecting a bill against a man which he had never expected to get, felt on particularly good terms with himself and the world in general.

"I'm strongly inclined to think," he remarked, as he critically observed the gathering ash on his second cigar, "that my worst fault has from the first been that of underrating myself. I have always been a much abler man than I have given myself credit for being. 'I'll settle that matter next week,' he said to me. 'Come,' I answered, 'shell out, or I'll secure a writ of *envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary* and settle *you*.' And, as I expected, the roll of those words just completely flabbergasted him, and he shelled out then and there. If I hadn't been so modest I think I should have got on better."

"Yes," observed Major Dodge, "mod-

esty is your besetting sin. There is not the least doubt in the world that if you could always deal exclusively with men like this one, who don't know the difference between a pug puppy and an ocean greyhound, that you would get along gloriously."

"Did I ever tell you," went on the Judge, not deigning to notice the other's remark, "how I outwitted the burglar when I lived at Syracuse?"

The question was put to a vote, and it was decided that as far as they were aware, he never had told how he outwitted the Syracuse burglar; so he went on:

"I suppose the burglars at Syracuse are among the brightest in the profession. I don't pretend to account for this; I simply state it as a fact. They are a clear-headed, energetic, intelligent body of men, quick to take up with new ideas and fertile in inventions, and withal they are liberal and broad-minded. For instance, a few years ago, instead of crying out against time-locks as cruel and unjust, in the way that many of the profession did elsewhere, the Syracuse burglars welcomed the time-lock as an inevitable step in the scientific progress of the

age, and set about devising a way to circumvent it. The result was that in a few months even a stem-winding, split-second time-lock had no terrors for them. But, as you will observe from my simple narrative, one of the most able of them fell before me.

"I had been down at Cortland on a case which kept me late. On the way up the train collided with a cow and delayed me further, so that I did not arrive in Syracuse till past one o'clock, and it must have been almost or quite two before I turned into the street where I lived. It was a fashionable part of the town, where the houses were generally large and stood some distance back from the roadway, with well-kept lawns covered with shrubbery, trees, fountains, and cast-iron animals from the leading foundries. I was proceeding up the gravel walk when I noticed something in the moonlight at my dining-room window. I stepped into the shadow of a cherry-tree (emblem of George Washington), and saw that it was a man with a short ladder. I instantly knew that it must be either a burglar or a book-agent. The chances seemed to be in favor of the burg-

lar, and it was very clear that he was about to go through my house.

"My first thought was to call for the police; then I remembered that there were never any of these worthy beings in that part of town at such a late hour. I was on the point of setting up an outcry anyhow, and if I had done so I should have made the startled atmosphere vibrate; but it then further occurred to me that it was customary in our neighborhood, when we heard a citizen yelling 'Burglars!' or making any similar heated nocturnal remarks, for everybody to turn over, and cover up his head with the bed-clothing, and relapse into further soothing slumber; so I refrained from any vocal effort whatever. That my shouts would probably frighten the burglar away seemed possible, but that would not be capturing him — something I had felt a strong desire to do from the first. The idea of running and fetching the police also came into my mind, but I feared the man would finish his work and be off before I could get back. Another notion which popped into my head was to rush up and seize him by the legs as he went up

the ladder, and then to handle him in a boisterous and unfeeling manner; but for some reason — I've forgotten what it was now — I decided against this plan also. As a historical fact, I may mention that he was a large man, weighing not less than two hundred and twenty-eight pounds, and had a heavy iron jimmy in one hand.

"But when I looked again I saw that the fellow was actually starting up the ladder, and the thought of my family silverware and jewelry, not to mention the manuscript of my work, 'Crabtree on Contracts,' nerved me to effort. A plan of action instantly flashed into my mind. I butted my head against the cherry-tree, smashing my silk hat, and threw off my overcoat, rolled up my trousers, cast away my collar and cravat, and rushed up just as the man was half-way in the window, and said, in a gruff voice,

"'Wot yer doin', old hoss?'

"He instantly came down the ladder, feeling for his weapons in a superfluous, disagreeable way.

"'Goin' to work old Crabtree, be yer?' I continued. 'Now see year, lemmy in wid

yer on this; I was on the ground 'bout as soon as you was.'

"That's just the way I talked to him, and it had the desired effect; he put up his pistol, grasped my hand, and we struck a bargain to rob the house together and divide the swag equally. We couldn't have come to an agreement with more neatness and despatch if we had been practical politicians at the opening of a campaign. It's just as I told you about those Syracuse burglars — they're a very superior class.

"We accordingly both went up the ladder, and were soon hard at work on the lower floor. I explained my familiarity with the surroundings by saying that I had done a little job there two years before. It made my blood boil to see him doubt the genuineness of some of my best solid silverware; and when the scoundrel dragged out a bottle of acid and actually showed me that it was plated, I was disgusted with him; but we got together a good deal of plunder, notwithstanding. 'Just you lay low now while I go up stairs and git the old man's leather and ticker,' I said to him. 'You'll wake up the old duffer, won't you?' he said,

anxiously. 'Not much,' I answered. 'You don't know what a sleeper he is. He defended me once, and was asleep in court from start to finish, which is why I got two years.' I went up, and in a few minutes came back with my watch and pocket-book, and told him that I was snoring like a foghorn. He recognized my ability as a burglar, and grasping my hand warmly, proposed that we always work together in the future.

"We had now made a pretty clean sweep of the house, and he suggested that it was time for us to bundle up our booty in the table-cloth and be going, as some of the police were early risers and we might get pinched. This seemed a prudent view of the situation, and I consented. But if you think I had any intention of letting that fellow get away, you are not acquainted with my character. He stood no more show than did the man I collected the bill from to-day. There was a small closet at one end of the dining-room which had escaped his attention. We had got the bundle half tied up, and he was vigorously growling about the quality of the silver-

ware, when I pointed out the closet and suggested its swag-containing possibilities. He instantly went over and stepped inside. I as promptly closed and locked the door. Then I went into the library, got a sheet of paper, and wrote this on it for the benefit of the servant-girl in the morning:

NOTICE.—Enclosed find one (1) burglar. Don't disturb. CRABTREE.

"I then closed the window, turned out the gas, brought in my overcoat from the lawn, and went up stairs to bed. I was tired, and in five minutes was sleeping soundly.

"Having been up so late the night before, I, of course, did not waken very early in the morning, and the entire family was stirring some time before I was. When Mrs. Crabtree got down she found the breakfast served, but the closet was undisturbed, our dining-room girl being a young person of extreme good sense. On the girl's calling her attention to it, Mrs. Crabtree read the note on the door, simply remarking, 'Very well, do not disturb it.'

Mrs. Crabtree, gentlemen, is a lady who seldom gets excited. The children, of course, with the natural curiosity of youth, asked some questions, but their mother merely said to them: 'Your father has got a burglar locked up in there. It doesn't interest us.' As I remarked, Mrs. Crabtree is a woman of rare self-possession and extraordinary common-sense. She said afterwards that it was amusing to hear our little girl, aged four, shout through the key-hole: 'Hello, Mr. Burglar!' and, 'Did papa lock you up because you were naughty?'

About nine o'clock I arose and went down to breakfast. When the burglar heard my voice in the dining-room he made some uncomplimentary observations from the other side of the door, but I paid no attention to him. I related the occurrences of the night before to Mrs. Crabtree, and after breakfast went into the library and spent a half-hour over the morning paper, reading with especial interest Alderman Moggerty's speech before the Council the night before in favor of cutting down the police force in the interests of economy. Then I went to my office. Here the first

thing I did was to send a note to the chief of police, as follows:

"DEAR SIR.—I have one large, thick-set burglar stored in my china-closet. Please remove the same at the expense of the city immediately.

Yours truly,

J. A. CRABTREE.

"When I went home at noon he was gone. What do you think about the latest phase of the Cuban question, Colonel?"

"Hold on, Judge," broke in Major Dodge; "finish your story before you tackle the little matter of international difficulties. Don't amputate the climax."

"Haven't I finished it? Didn't I say that when I got home the man was gone? Do you think I followed up his subsequent career? Got an idea that I sent him flowers in jail and put him on my calling list? Harboring the notion that I ran down to Auburn prison every visitors' day, and had a fatherly cry on that scoundrel's neck for old association's sake?"

"You miss the point, Judge," persisted

Major Dodge. "Dick Bailey, of Utica, told me the whole story, and if you don't—"

"I question the good taste of this, Major," interrupted the Judge, with feeling. "Only a life-long friendship saves you. I said that when I got home the man was gone. He was — very much so. But the fact is the miserable wretch broke out after my departure, intimidated the women and children, locked them all in another closet, and then calmly looted the house, not missing my wife's jewel-case, put his plunder in my best alligator-skin bag, and walked out the front door, borrowing a light for one of my cigars from the coming chief of police at the corner, and made his escape. I got an anonymous note from him the next day saying that if he ever went into the junk business he would call for the silverware. And that evening Moggerty got his pet scheme through, reducing the police force one-half."

XIII

YULE-TIDE MEMORIES

The report becoming current about town Christmas day that Mr. Milo Bush had, the night before, been attacked by a pack of hungry wolves and chased half a dozen times around the track of the Bon Pierre County Horse-racing Association, as a faithful chronicler of events I sought out the gentleman to obtain the facts in the case. Unhappily for the languishing cause of local contemporaneous history, it speedily became apparent that there was nothing in the rumor; indeed, Mr. Bush stoutly maintained that no wolf had so much as said boo to him.

"I was," he said, in an explanatory tone, "down at Bob Cat last night to a Christmas tree in the Methodist church. Feller put on a bull-terrier pup for Jim Cozzens. Something the minister said in his remarks to the infant class riled the dog — he didn't seem to know nothing about dogs anyhow — and he

begun to bark and jump on his chain — the dog did, not the minister — he wasn't hung up with the dolls and things, but was tied to the trunk — and he carried on so that nobody could get within forty rods of the tree, and they had to fish off the presents with a split bamboo rod. That's what comes of a man who don't understand bull-terriers trying to run a Christmas tree."

"Yes," I answered, reflectively, "a man who doesn't thoroughly understand dogs should avoid Christmas festivities."

"That's what," returned Mr. Bush. "Did I ever tell you of the fancy, improved, and patent-applied-for Christmas tree that we had once back in Pennsylvania?"

"I don't recall it."

"Then I never told you. It was this 'ere way: A Philadelphia schoolma'am come out there to Roaring Spring to teach the school. She was one o' these here 'way-up women, al'ays a-quoting poetry and such guff and talking 'bout art. She boarded at old Deacon Pulseater's. Took down the picture of 'William Penn treating the Indians' in the deacon's parler, and put up what she called an edging. Some good

jedges of pictures didn't cotton to hern as much as they did to the deacon's, either.

"Well, the hollerdays begun to loom up ahead, and this here schoolma'am come out with the blamedest idea *you* ever heard tell of. It was to have a new kind of Christmas tree. She said the old kind was too common and ord'nary. She ranked 'em with the picture of Penn's treat, I reckon. 'Let us have something new and picturrecks,' says the schoolma'am. Her notion was, in place of the tall, live, springy tree, to get an old broken-topped one, with mebby one or two limbs reaching out sideways, and with a big holler trunk with moss on it. And you may put me down amongst the Injuns, *not taxed*, if in a week she didn't have every last one of us in Roaring Spring crazy about it.

"So the day before Christmas a lot of us sashayed out into the woods for a likely tree. We found one with a trunk as big as a barr'l, or bigger, broke off fifteen or twenty feet from the ground, leaning over a good deal, and with one long limb and two or three small ones. We rooted it up and loaded it on the deacon's sleigh, which wasn't hard,

being as it was holler; though I reco'lect remarking, 'Boys,' says I, 'this is the all-firedest heaviest *holler* tree I ever lifted on'—just like that, I says; but somebody speaks up and says he, that I never lifted on *no* kind of a tree before, which wa'n't fur from the truth, so I didn't say nothing more. Well, we set up the tree in the Presbyterian church, and everybody brought their presents, and the schoolma'am and the committee put 'em on, with pop-corn and red apples and taller candles. It was the funniest-looking tree you ever seen, with a lot of rocks around it covered with cotton bat'n', to look like snow, and a stuffed owl on the big limb; but the schoolma'am was happy, and we didn't care. We'd a-brought in Paxawaxa Mountain and set it up for her if she'd a-said so. It's cur'ous about schoolma'ams, 'specially *Philadelphia* schoolma'ams. Man in their hands becomes no better than a—no, sir, not a doggasted speck better than a yaller-faced Chinaman.

"Well, sir, at seven o'clock that evening we was all in that church, waiting for the thing to open up. The schoolma'am set on the front seat, a-smiling and a-beaming,

and we all set on back seats, also a-smiling *and* a-beaming, just because we had made her happy and had got something new in Christmas trees. Young man, we had.

"Then Deacon Pulseater got up to make some suitable remarks to the infant class. The deacon was sup'rentendent of the Sunday-school, and he done it every Christmas, though this time, being soft on the schoolma'am and tickled to death over the igee of the tree, like the rest of us, he let himself out stronger than usual. 'Little ones,' says the deacon, 'we-uns have gathered together here in this here place for another happy Yool-tide'— that's what the deacon said, just like that —'Yool-tide'— got it from the schoolma'am, you see. 'We are here again,' says the deacon, a-rubbing his hands and sort of swelling up, 'once more to make glad the hearts of loved ones. But we have not the old-fashioned tree, have we? No, little ones, we have not the old-fashioned tree. We have a better tree — a tree which is beautiful and picturrecks. See its grand old trunk, children, which has braved the ripsnorting gales of ten thousand winters. But, my little hearers, that trunk is holler,

like the sins and vanities of this world. It is holler, I repeat. Do you reckon there's a squirrel down in the holler trunk of this here old tree? Who knows? *I* think there *is* a squirrel down in it. I thought I heard one then. What little boy will volunteer to go down into the holler trunk of our old tree and drive out the squirrel? Ah! I see hands raised — one, two, three little boys want to go down into the holler trunk of our old tree and drive out the squirrel. But there are no bad, dangerous beasts down in the holler trunk of our old tree — oh no! There are no —' Just then the deacon looked 'round, and seen a big, black, hungry b'ar coming up out of the top of the trunk. 'Children,' yelled the deacon, 'the blame thing is loaded after all!' and you may lar-rup me if the deacon didn't go over the backs of them pews for the door like a tight-rope walker, hollering bloody murder every jump, and the rest of us wa'n't much behind him; and the only one of us that had plain fool sense enough to think of the schoolma'am was Hank Scott, and he come out last, a-carrying her right in his arms in a dead faint; and Hank said that when he

left there was four b'ars out and more b'iling up into sight; and two weeks later I'll be snaked if Hank didn't marry the schoolma'am; though some people said, a long time afterwards, that Hank did say to 'em one day that he wished he'd staid and faced the b'ars like a hero an' a gentleman and let some other blooming idjet rescue the schoolma'am.

"And it seems to me while we're a-talking 'bout it, that this here hornswaggled Yooltide always makes trouble fer somebody. It ain't what it's cracked up to be. There was the Perfessor, that used to live here in Signal Butte. He wasn't a man to borrow trouble, either — though ready enough to borrow anything else. In fact, he was the ca'mest man, this here Perfessor was, the frozenest, ca'mest man, 'specially about his debts, that ever struck these diggings. Presenting a bill to the Perfessor was about like asking a wooden cigar-store Injun to translate a Chinese laundry check. And debts was just all he had, too, except his fiddle and a wife and six children.

"The Perfessor was a lib'ral buyer — he'd buy anything he could get trusted for.

'Charge it,' was always his word, and mostly the folks would do it, too. He was smooth — smooth as the back of his own fiddle. *Meant* to pay, of course; *strictly* honest; but just didn't never have it. *Wouldn't* work — do nothing but fiddle and whittle and smoke and talk. Used to be fond o' quoting from Shakespeare, too, as, 'All flesh is grass,' 'Smile and the world smiles with you,' 'The early bird snatches the worm,' and so forth. He might be right in the middle of this kind of talk at the grocery when a man presented a bill, but he would just take it, wave it in the air slow once or twice, like a cat waving her tail when you let her out the front door, and then say, 'Young man, I'll file it,' and put it in his pocket. He would file it, too. Had a file at home made out of six feet of lightning-rod set in a piece of plank, sharp end up, and every bill he got he'd stab it on this, till it was full, then he'd clean 'em off, swap 'em to a tin-peddler at four cents a pound, and start new. One man once got tired and disgusted, and so just sent him a receipted bill and closed the account up. The Perfessor come right down to the store, and

says he: 'See here, what d'you sign your name down here for? Never seen *that* done before.'

"After a while he sawed a hole in his front door, so's the collectors could shove their bills in if he didn't happen to be at home. Still nights sometimes he would move his lightning-rod stab out on the piazzer with a card on it, 'File Your Bills Here,' and there it would stand half the forenoon, looming up like the steeple on a 'Piscopal church. When he walked round town you'd see a percession of bill-collectors tailing along behind him like the crowd following a man putting up circus posters. But he was just as ca'm, and hardly seemed to notice 'em. 'It is the way of the world,' he would say. 'I am advertised by my loving friends.' I never heered him complain but once, and that was the time he hung up his stocking at Christmas.

"He come into the grocery Christmas morning looking gloomy. 'Wot's the matter, Perfessor?' says Shanks. 'Cheer up on this here glad day. "Smile, and the world smiles with you," you know.' 'Yes,' says the Perfessor, fetching a sigh, 'but that

ain't all of it. "Weep, and you weep alone," the mighty bard adds, and with trooth. The folks in this here town are mercenary wretches. They cannot bury business even at Yool-tide.' 'More suppermentary perceedings?' asks Shanks. 'Worse nor that,' answers the Perfessor. 'Last night my wife says to me, "My dear, the young uns are a-going to hang up their stockings in the good old-fashioned way, and they want their dad to j'in 'em and hang up his'n." I was fiddling, so I just wags my head and says, "All right, my dear." Always ready to do anything for the little uns, if I do say it myself. So my wife druv some nails in the wall along back of the stove, and the children hung up their stockings. My oldest boy is like his father, with an inquiring mind, and says he, "How's Sandy Claws going to get down that there stove-pipe with his pack — that's what *I* want to know?" "Oh," says I, "we'll just leave the winder unfastened and up about a inch, and he can see it and h'ist it furder, and come in that way." So we done it; but 'fore we went to bed this here man Cooper that runs the furniture-store dropped in for a neighborly

chat, and we showed him how we was going to 'range things for Sandy Claws.

"'The young uns got us up early this morning, and when I went down I was tickled to see my sock stuffed full of presents. There was also an easy-chair by the side of it, labelled "From your loving wife." My heart throbbed with joy, and picking up my vierlin, I extracted a few notes of heavenly harmony expressive of my in'ard emotions while the children emptied their stockings. "Now look at yourn, my dear," says my wife. "It seems to be powerful full. Reckon you got more'n your share." So I takes my sock from the nail, and the first thing I brings out is a bill from old Jones for groceries — groceries, mind you, which was et up months ago! Then I pulls out another, from Jacobs, for a suit of clothes which was wore out and give way to a tramp. The next was from Jackson & Brown for a set of dishes which has been all broke but two plates. So it went plumb to the bottom of the sock — nothing but bills, inserted through the winder by the grasping and treacherous hands of my fel-

low-townsmen. I sunk into my chair with a heart of lead. "Cheer up, pop," says my oldest boy. "You have your easy-chair anyhow." "Troo," says I; "my wife did not forget me. It is at home that a man finds his real friends. The world is cold and crool and unfeeling. O woman," goes on I, "a ministering angel thou!" and I chirped up and begun to whistle as I pulled on my sock. I felt something in the toe, hauled it off, inserted my hand, and drew out a bill from Cooper for the chair.'

"And I'll be hanged," said Mr. Bush in closing, "if the Perfessor didn't put his head in his hands and bu'st into tears right there in the grocery. It touched us so that we took up a collection and bought him a pound of smoking-tobacker. But he never got over it, and a month later moved away to Montana, and that was the last we ever seen of him.

"And that ain't all I've got laid up agin this here season of peace on yearth. There is a pussonal matter. It was back in Pennsylvania when I was a young man. Knowed a feller there that was the likeliest fool in the State. *Biggest* fool I ever seen.

Dutcher was his name — *Jerry* Dutcher. He wasn't one of these here amatoor fools that just work at it for fun, but a reg'lar *perfessional* fool. Didn't know enough to ache when he was hurt. Couldn't a-scratched a match on a grindstun — not if he *tried*.

"Well, this Jerry got it into his head that he was good-looking. Thought he was a reg'lar Ap Holler — whoever he was. Got a notion the women was all thinking about him. Finally he acchooly got soft on the same gal I was sort o' shinning up to. I was some weak them days myself, or I wouldn't a-been took in by that gal. Evenchooly I seen throo that gal.

"One Christmas old Uncle Peleg Twigger, who was the father of the gal, give a sort of a shindy, and asked in we neighbors. I went, and so did this here Jerry, and a passel of other folks, mostly fools. The gal, Jerusha, was there making bigger fools of most of 'em. Us younger people indulged in various pastimes of a more or less intellecchooal character, such as hunt-the-slipper, Copenhagen, and sich, while the more elderly folks played old sledge and drunk

hard cider in the kitchen. This Jerry was all the time getting betwixt me and Jerusha in his fool way — a-curling up his mustache and a-striking attitoods. Old Si Hooker finally struck up with fiddle music, and we danced — tripped the light bombastic toe, was what Jerry said. I could a-knocked him down. And mostly he tripped it with Jerusha, too — he got four dances, and I got one.

"Then the next thing on the porgramme was the distribution of the Christmas presents. In the past they'd had a Christmas tree, but no, that wouldn't do for Jerusha this time. To tell the truth, that gal was just about as foolish as Jerry. I didn't see it then, but I seen it later. Woman, thy name is flayalty, observes the poet — and he hit it pertty near right.

"No, nothing would do for Jerusha this time but a Sandy Claus — reg'lar live tomfool, with a pack and whiskers, a-playing he *was* Sandy Claus. 'Mr. Bush,' says Jerusha, a-purring like a Maltese cat — 'Mr. Bush, will you honor us by being our Sandy Claus?' 'Sartenly,' says I; 'it is yours to

command;' just like that, I says, beginning to catch on to Jerry's ways.

"Well, they got me my pack and my whiskers, and I put 'em on, and then says Jerusha, 'You will find a ladder outside to get up to the chimbley with.' 'Wot,' says I, 'have I got to come down the jim-fizzled chimbley?' 'Of course,' says she; 'all Sandy Clauses do. The fire is out. Our chimbley is large. It is all for the children, you know, Mr. Bush. Don't you love children, Mr. Bush?' 'Yes,' says I — just like that —'yes, jig-wiggle 'em, I love children, but I'm no chimbley-swab.' Then that there Jerry Dutcher come up, his elbows sticking out, and says he: 'Is yer Sandy Claus balky, Miss Jerusha? Let me be yer Sandy Claus. I love to make happy the little innercent children.' Then I goes out into the night, ready to back down into a volcainer.

"The bore of that there chimbley was not large, but by slipping my pack up on the back of my neck, and folding my whiskers and holding 'em under my chin, I managed to get started. Soot got in my eyes, and I was forced to omit many remarks which would have fit the occasion, for fear it would

also get in my mouth. Them remarks I said inwardly, however, and they applied to the chimbley, the idgit Jerry, the gal, and the happy, innercent children which I loved.

"I calculated that I'd gone rooting and scraping down that hole about five hundred feet, when I stopped a-straddle of something. I felt about, and found it to be an iron rod, which seemed to a-been put in by the man wot built the thing to hold the sides together. I h'isted up, but my pack was catched. I tried to swing over, like a man getting off of hossback, but there wasn't room. My whiskers had come unpacked, and were wiped up over my face mostly, but I could not get my hands up to brush them down. The voice of the happy, innercent children which I loved come to my ears. The distant strains of the fiddle floated up. I could hear Jerry and Jerusha talking gayly. My feelings, repressed too long, bust out. Opening my mouth, regardless of both soot and artificial hair, I spoke my mind freely as become a man.

"My remarks attracted the attention of all, and I heard the women removing the children from the room before I could say

more. Then I heard Jerusha looking up the chimbley. 'I can see Mr. Bush's legs,' says she. Then he himself must be near,' says Jerry. 'Are you stuck?' calls old Mrs. Twigger. 'Wot did I say?' says I. 'I would dislike to repeat wot you said,' says she. Then they all begun to talk. 'We must rescue him,' says Jerusha; 'the children are waiting for their presents.' 'Wot can we do?' says old Si. 'I suggest pushing of him down somehow,' says Jerry. 'Couldn't we drop something on him from the top of the chimbley — say an anvil?' They all said no. 'Then,' says Jerry, 'why not h'ist him up? Wot do you say to a keg of powder in the fireplace? Let us blow the young man who was so anxious to be Sandy Claus out the top of the chimbley like a b'iling volcainer.'

"Then they shut the idgit up, and brought a crowbar, and after reaching up and measuring with a long stick and locating me, they all went up stairs, and begun to dig throo the bricks where I was. 'Let me wield the bar which shall liberate a hero,' says Jerry, and they let him. 'Be careful; do not overdo,' I heard Jerusha saying to

him. 'A brave and an innercent man is imprisoned — shall I spare my muscle?' says Jerry. By-and-by he got a hole through. I wiggled around and, seeing my chance, did not spare my muscle, but kicked him in the jaw like a mule, knocking him off the chair he was standing on, pretending it was a mistake as I backed out the hole. He struck the floor, and Jerusha rushed up. 'Alars, my Jeremiah,' shrieks she; 'dead, dead! Alars!' 'No,' says I, 'but he will be when I can get clear out,' my head still in the chimbley. Jerry got up, with a little blood on his mouth where I'd kicked him. 'Wot! Heavings, my Jeremiah bleeds!' screams Jerusha. 'He will die! Yes, yes, he will die!' and she faints in his arms. Just then her father comes in, pretty short-sighted from the cider. 'Wot yer holding my darter that way for?' says he. 'She is fainted,' says Jerry. 'Besides, we're going to be married, you know.' 'That's wot you be,' says the old man. 'Here, Squire, marry 'em!' 'But the gal is in a faint,' says the Squire. 'I have recovered,' says Jerusha, firm as a rock. So the Squire married 'em right there, with me all out of

the chimbley except my pack, which wouldn't come throo the hole, so I hung with my toes a foot from the floor dooring the bootiful and impressive ceremony. Then Jerusha looks up, and says she, 'Mr. Bush, if yer face was clean, mebby you might be allowed to kiss the bride.' Then I kicked at Jerry again, but missed him, and they cut me down, and I went home, thinking to myself wot a blessed thing is a happy Christmas."

XIV

A SUBURBAN ADVENTURE

"But, Doctor," I protested, "what is the man good for? You say he can't milk, can't drive, doesn't know how to take care of carriages or horses, broke the lawn-mower the first time he tried to use it, and is unable to distinguish between a cabbage-plant and a California redwood. What *is* his strong point?"

The Doctor laughed, and looked toward his wife at the other end of the table.

"Well," he said slowly, "we've had Andrew three months, and I don't know as I can say what his strong point is." He paused, and then added, cheerfully: "Unless it is smoking. He is a good smoker; I've seldom seen a better. And I'll give him credit for economy and good sense in that line, too; he smokes a pipe — since I locked up my cigars. Yes, Andrew's strong point is the steady, long-distance smoke."

"My dear, you're too hard on Andrew," came from the other end of the table. "You know he has done good work at painting."

"Yes," answered the Doctor, "he does like to paint. I told him to paint a new fence which I recently had built around the lot back of the barn. Before I knew it he had given it six coats. I have no idea how many more he has put on at odd times since, but I know it has noticeably increased its apparent bulk. The posts of that fence look as if they were wearing diving-suits, and the barbed wire along the top has the appearance of a chain cable. I ran down the Jersey coast for a couple of days, and he painted the barn and carriage-house. He painted 'em roofs and all, and when I got back raw paint was dripping off the eaves. I remonstrated, and next day I found him in the cellar of the barn painting that. Yesterday I saw him peering down the well, and I can only fear the worst."

"But why do you keep him?" I insisted.

The Doctor looked embarrassed, almost sheepish. I saw, when it was too late, that it was like asking a man who is a drunkard why he drinks. He looked toward the other

end of the table, but got no help. At last he said, simply: "I don't know. But, as I said, he smokes freely and easily. And as long as the landscape holds out I think I can depend on him to paint."

Two hours later I suggested the advisability of my returning to the city. The Doctor looked troubled.

"I was going to drive you to the station," he said, "but I just got a telephone call which is urgent."

"But can't Andrew drive me?" I asked.

"Well, he can start with you, and he might get you there. He has driven me there a few times; though it is expensive for me, because I have to treat the people he runs down free. I'll tell him to take the buckboard and old Bob, and reduce the danger to a minimum."

"Oh, I'll risk it," I laughed.

"But," interposed my hostess, turning to her husband, "this is not the way to use a guest."

"Well, I know it isn't," said the Doctor, half impatiently. "But what can I do? I — I — of course I'll treat you free too," he said, as he turned to me.

I laughed again, and intimated that I felt little fear.

"But you don't know Andrew," went on the Doctor. "I told you that he can't milk at all; in point of fact, he is a worse driver than he is milker. You'll find that going to the station with him will be a good deal like Horace Greeley's famous ride with Hank Monk which Mark Twain tells about."

In a few minutes Andrew was at the door with the buckboard. He had a bland, honest Scandinavian face which suggested a clear conscience and the prospect of a good week for painting. I took my seat beside him, and we were off.

"Put your right arm around the back of the seat and be ready to seize the dashboard with your other hand," called the Doctor.

I was convinced that my friend was making game of me, and glanced at my watch. Fatal move!

"I'm afraid we haven't much time in which to make that train," I said.

"Yah, aye tank not," answered Andrew. He dropped the rein from his right hand,

seized the whip, and struck old Bob a resounding crack. It could not have hurt much, but it was a sort of a transcontinental cut; as the whip momentarily rested along his side it reminded me of a railroad map of a line reaching from New York to San Francisco. The animal broke into a run and veered sharply to the left. Andrew dropped the left line, seized the other in both hands, and drew him squarely across the street. A bevy of girls in Sunday frocks scrambled up a retaining-wall and onto a lawn as we cut a scallop in the sidewalk and then went tearing down the middle of the street.

"De hoss are not use to driving," said Andrew, as he slapped the reins up and down. "Aye tank he be a colt."

A man on a bicycle fell off as we took a crossing diagonally and rounded the first corner on two wheels. The animal's gait was a moderate run, but we were nevertheless making slow general progress, since two-thirds of our effort was taken up in crossing from one gutter to the other, as Andrew hauled first on the left line and then on the right.

"Aye tank he never was broke right," said Andrew. "Aye'll learn him not to shy," and he dropped both reins, took the whip, and applied it lightly, but with an all-embracing end-to-end touch which drove the animal mad. We were rushing straight down the middle of the street, and I was congratulating myself that it could not last long at that rate, when Andrew took up the lines again and began to pull blindly.

"See; he begin to shy again. What you scart about, you loafer? — aye don't see not'ings."

A woman screamed and dragged a baby-carriage out of the way. We snipped a bit of bark off a shade tree, and the next second winged a lamp-post on the opposite side of the street. A man leaped from a crossing, and we ran down his straw hat. We took the next corner close-hauled, the forward wheel passing one side of a low hydrant and the corresponding hind wheel the other.

"See; he try to upset us on de water-spout," said Andrew. "Aye'll learn you!" and he leaned over the dash-board and again applied the whip on the transequine plan.

The animal went ahead furiously. Some women ran screaming out of the way. A man shouted.

"There's a policeman right ahead!" I cried.

"All right. Aye know dat fellow. He can't stop us. Aye'll run over 'im."

He clapped the whip in his mouth crosswise, braced himself, and zigzagged in the direction of the officer. Left alone, the horse would certainly have gone over him; but a lucky, though unintentional, pull by Andrew caused us to pass to the right, and we only grazed the official legs with our near wheels. We snapped a spoke from a carriage which was struggling out of our way, and then rushed straight for a memorial monument to a Revolutionary hero.

"Look out!" I shouted.

"Aye sees it," answered Andrew. "Aye won't hit it. Aye knows how to drive." He dropped one line, half rose, and put his whole strength on the other. It saved us, and we brought off only one iron picket from the surrounding fence. We crossed the street and struck a stone horse-block. The buckboard threw us high into the air,

but caught us adroitly as we came down. Then we turned in and crossed the corner of a front yard and went through the shower of a lawn-sprinkler. We took to the street again and knocked down a man.

"Aye'll get you dare in time," said Andrew, talking without removing the whip from his mouth. "Aye drove in de old country. Yust you hold on." We were on the last reach for the station. Fortunately the horse was now running away in good earnest, and Andrew had largely lost control of him. The buckboard was rocking like a boat in a heavy swell, first on the wheels of one side, and then on those of the other. A score of dogs were in full cry behind us, but their chase was hopeless. We ran down a flock of geese, and they rose all around us. Men ahead were shouting to other drivers to clear the track.

"Aye drove when aye was a boy. Aye like to drive," explained Andrew.

We dashed across the plaza before the station.

"Right here," I shouted to Andrew, as I saw that we must run down a group of hackmen if we went nearer. He threw his

whole weight on the lines, and the horse stopped stiff-legged. I went out over the forward wheel and struck the ground on my hands and knees. I scrambled to my feet, picked up my umbrella, which Andrew had jettisoned, and ran for the station. He started the horse with a crack of the whip, missed going over me by a hair's-breadth, turned a square corner, and tore back across the plaza and up the street. I collapsed on the nearest bench, and waited twenty minutes for the train.

XV

JOURNALISM AT TUCKER'S GULCH

Though Mr. Mark Wallis had, in the course of thirty-five years, lost a good deal of time in walking from town to town, he nevertheless had had experience in many different printing-offices, and after the paper was off the press Friday night, was fond of drawing on his reminiscences. On one occasion, finding himself, happily for me, in a loquacious mood, he related the following valuable incident:

"In the early days of the gold excitement in the Black Hills I was at Tucker's Gulch, working in the *Daily Prospector* office. Henry McNabb was the editor. He was a little sawed-off sample of humanity, some five feet high, and weighing about a hundred and ten pounds. By some congenital misdeal, however, he had got, in the matter of combativeness, the disposition of a man twice as high and weighing seven or eight hundred pounds. As a consequence he was

always in hot water, though, to do him justice, on the occasion I have in mind it was not the fault of his peppery temper which brought about the trouble, but circumstances over which he had no control.

"The disproportion in Mr. McNabb's size and temper rendered it necessary to keep a fighting editor on the staff, and I being a man of peace, inclined not only to turn the other cheek, but also to point out its advantages for smiting purposes, this important position was held by a printer named Snort — Reuben Snort — at least that is what he said his name was, and nobobdy felt disposed to question it. Reuben was large and square-cornered, with craggy and beetling outlines, a jutting lower jaw, and a sheer height of some six feet and two inches. His head was round and evidently of granite formation, and covered with a heavy growth of brindled hair. His nose had been broken in some cataclysm of the remote past, and his ears had also suffered. Take him all in all, he was of a stern and forbidding aspect, and reminded the beholder of some of the wilder scenery along the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in Arizona. He was an ex-

tensive and industrious consumer of tobacco, which he borrowed with beautiful impartiality from McNabb and me, or anybody else who had any to lend. In the matter of borrowing tobacco Reuben realized the universal brotherhood of man more nearly than any one I ever knew. In this respect he recognized neither high nor low, rich nor poor; all mankind was the same to him. He exercised no favoritism in his borrowing, treating all men with equal consideration. The wife of one of the judges of the Supreme Court called at the office one day, and he even tried to borrow some from her, observing easily, to her somewhat indignant reply, that he 'didn't know but she might be taking some home to the court.'

"As Snort never wrote anything for the paper, the entire editorial work fell on McNabb. He used to turn out from two to three columns a day, which we set up and printed off. Our office was above a liquor-store called the Happy Home. Domestic difficulty seemed to be characteristic of the Happy Home, and the report of fire-arms was frequent; and occasionally a carelessly aimed bullet would come ripping up

through the floor and pass off by way of the ceiling. This made McNabb nervous, and he finally had a heavy oak floor laid over the other, which in a manner did away with the annoyance, though some of the patrons of the Home, notably one William Brower, of Double Eagle Canyon, carried such uncommonly heavy fire-arms that the oak planks offered inadequate resistance to the flight of their bullets. But to give Mr. Brower his due, he seldom wasted shots on the ceiling.

"But before I speak further of the genial Brower I must refer to a difficulty under which the office labored. This was lack of 'sorts' in the type. Capital W's and H's would run short nearly every day, while lower-case n's, s's, and some other letters would frequently fail us. McNabb came to show great ingenuity in avoiding the use of the letters in which there was a deficiency. Thus he would speak of the 'great and glorious capital city of this nation,' instead of referring to it simply as Washington, when we reported a growing scarcity of W's; and if s's failed, when writing of a new mine he would check his impulse to say that 'sam-

ples of ore assayed $100 per ton,' and observe that 'a fragment examined in the approved manner indicated $100 per ton.' But even with this letters would sometimes run out, when we would do the best we could, and I remember an item which appeared in this shape: 'Jamex Thompxon, of Spearfixh, wax in town yexterday. He reportx that the new xmelter ix in full blaxt. We wixh the Conxolidated company xuccexx.'

"McNabb could easily have replenished the type with the necessary sorts, but he never did. No bad results of the lack were ever experienced till on the occasion of a visit to town from Mr. William Brower, before mentioned. Mr. Brower was a large, quarrelsome man given to liquor. About once a month he would come down from Double Eagle Canyon and spend a loud and hilarious week in town, if not sooner crippled by a well-aimed bullet or chased out by a sheriff's posse. McNabb never had any trouble with him. Indeed he rather welcomed his visits, as they were sure to be productive of local news. Too frequently this news occupied the obituary column.

But this gave McNabb no concern, as he was rather strong on obituaries, and they filled up as much as anything. In fact McNabb kept a supply of obituaries of prominent citizens constantly on hand, and these were slapped into the paper in case of an emergency, sometimes before the deceased was dead.

"It happened on the occasion of one of Brower's periodical incursions that we ran short of capital B's. Usually these held out pretty well, but there was a long reading-notice of a coming circus that day, and they always eat up capitals in a surprising manner. There were lines about the 'Bounding Beasts of the Jungle,' the 'Biggest Show ever Brought to this Country,' the 'Bow-Backed Behemoth of the Bottomless Bog,' the 'Conglomeration of Living and Breathing Wonders Bought with the Sacrifice of Billows of Blood and Billions of Bullion,' and so forth. Along in the afternoon McNabb saw Brower, and came in and wrote a personal about him. When I took it off the copy-hook and saw that it called for capital B's, being anxious to avoid all

misunderstandings where Brower was concerned, I said to McNabb:

"'The cap B's are all out. Can't we get around these somehow?'

"'Like to know how you'd do it,' he said, with a scowl, glancing over the copy.

"'You might say that "The first citizen of Double Eagle Canyon is observed on our streets," and so forth,' I suggested, meekly, after a moment's reflection.

"'Every man in Double Eagle Canyon is the first citizen,' snapped McNabb, scornfully.

"'Then we might pull some of the cap B's in the circus notice, and substitute lower-case,' I suggested.

"'Can't afford to offend an advertiser these hard times. Put it as usual when we're short of a capital,' retorted McNabb, turning away.

"I went back to the case, and the next morning this item came out in *The Prospector:*

"'We noticed the genial bill brower, of Double Eagle Canyon, in our midst yesterday. He is a whole-souled man, and will stay a week.'

"It was about two o'clock that afternoon when I heard heavy steps on the outside stairs, and suspected that Brower was coming. I was setting up one of McNabb's editorials on 'The Orderly Character of Tucker's Gulch,' when the door opened, and I saw that my suspicions had been well founded. Bill Brower towered before us. His genial eye was of the color of an autumn sunset, and the flavor of his breath filled the office like an in-rolling fog. He stepped to McNabb, carrying a copy of the paper with an unsteady finger on the offensive item, and said:

"'See yere, you insec', what you using them there ornery little b's fer when you mention a gentleman in this yere shot-gun wad of yourn?'

"McNabb kept on writing, and never looked up. 'We used those because we didn't have any smaller ones,' he replied, calmly, after a pause that seemed an eternity.

"The whole-souled Brower drew back in astonishment, then he dashed the paper on the floor and said:

"'Do you know what I'm goin' to do to a reptile about your size? I'm goin' to take

A VISIT FROM ONE OF NATURE'S NOBLEMEN

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him up and carry him out and pound the surface of the yearth with him! I'm goin' to wear out the main street of the town with him! It's goin' to take the path-master two days to repair the road after I get done with him!'

"He stepped toward McNabb, who simply remarked, as he scratched away, 'Reub!' in a gentle, half-reproving tone. This individual laid down his composing-stick and strode over like the shadow of a great storm advancing across the desert. He seized the dissatisfied visitor by the collar and drew him back. The struggle which followed was titanic. The first thing which was overturned was the stove. Next the job-press went, and then a fifty-pound keg of black news ink. McNabb never looked up from his desk. I found afterwards that he was writing an article on 'The Advantages in our Midst offered to a Good Class of Settlers.' Part of the time the two men were down on the floor rolling in the ink. The uproar was something deafening. I kept up my work on 'The Orderly Character of Tucker's Gulch' as much as possible, but I could not resist the temptation to

watch the struggle out of the corner of my eye. The terms those two men applied to each other, when they could catch enough breath for it, were something shocking to hear. There was no mincing matters — each let the other know just what he thought of him. Once the visiting earthquake was using the mallet to pound the head of the resident tornado, who responded with a brass-lined galley; but neither seemed to make any impression on the unyielding countenance of the other. After a time Reuben got some sort of a purchase on his antagonist and pushed him through the light pine door, smashing it utterly. I heard them struggling on the landing at the head of the stairs outside, then suddenly there was a series of thumps which shook the building. McNabb casually tucked his pen behind his ear, gathered up the loose leaves of his manuscript, and said:

"'Something seems to be falling yearthward.'

"Just then Reub came in and went back to his case, carelessly, as if he had been out to mail a letter.

"'Do we need to use cap B's for him?' asked McNabb.

"'It ain't necessary,' answered Reub.

"McNabb scratched off an item, and this is the way it appeared the next morning:

"'bill brower, of Double Eagle Canyon, made us a pleasant call yesterday. bill brower is one of nature's noblemen, a good neighbor, and a jovial companion. Drop in again, billy, when you have time to make a longer stay.'

"And as long as I was there McNabb never got any more type; but though we chronicled the movements of the gentleman from Double Eagle Canyon always with small b's, no matter how many large ones there were, he never came in to see us about it again."

XVI

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE STAGE

Forty years' experience in various capacities, if not actually on the stage at least around the edge of it, had given the old property man a reminiscent fund of large proportions. On this, of a midnight, the performance over, he was fond of drawing, aided only by the gentle influence of a pot of beer. If his memory and regard for the truth were to be trusted, he had witnessed many stormy scenes in both the realistic and the romantic drama.

"Mistakes will occur, and things will get mixed up in the theatrical business as well as in any other," he observed one night, seated on a "practical" stump. "I remember the season when I was with 'The Country Farm.' Everything real, you know,—real cows, horses, chickens, and all that sort of stuff. One act was in the city, and there were real fire-engines, cable-cars, ferry-boats, policemen, and such like. Good

play, and took in money by the barrelful, but hard work for me. Had to buy fresh veg'tables for the cows to eat in full view of the augence, and look after a whole raft of such things.

"One night out at Dubuque, Iowa, just as the curtain went up, the bay mule, who appeared in the first tableau, kicked the brass cannon used in the Fourth-of-July scene. He was a powerful kicker, having been practicing on me for about three months, and the heat generated by the striking of his shoe against the cannon set off the charge, and it blazed away right among the real cows and other animals. The whole caboodle of 'em stampeded straight onto the stage. The real chickens also flew on, and the fire-engine horses likewise naturally charged in, the racket being right in their line. The stage hands and most of the actors rushed on to try to straighten out the tangle. About this time a water-pipe burst, and something set off the thunder-machine, and it began to thunder worse than I had ever heard it before in a long and eventful life. This jarred the snow department, and the paper flakes began to flutter down pretty

lively, while a box of red fire in the wings caught from the smouldering cannon wadding, and cast a lurid and fitful glare o'er the general cataclysm, as I may call it. The real Durham bull tossed the heavy villain on his horns, and the real old Southdown ram butted the comic man across the foot-lights and back into the neighborhood of the fifth row, landing him in the lap of his honor the Mayor. It was a scene long to be remembered, with the chickens flying up into the proscenium boxes and cackling like mad, and the orchestra trying to play the whole thing down with a red-hot selection from Wagner. But we got it all straightened out at last."

"But what about the audience?" inquired an innocent listener. "Wasn't there a panic?"

"Not a bit of it. That's the funny part of the whole thing. They were a very intelligent augence, right up to date on the realistic drama, and they thought it was the first act. Never heard such applause in my life. The manager wanted to repeat the thing every night in place of the opening scene;

but the author wouldn't listen to it. He said it wasn't Art.

"There's always a pile of trouble with this 'ere realistic drama, anyhow. I remember when I was with 'The Old Barnyard' how one night at Binghamton the leading ox got mad, and switched his tail till he knocked the cigar out of the hero's mouth, and into the load of hay, and set it afire, and we had to use all the real water from the tank scene to put it out. But I don't know as it's much worse than the legit, after all — only different.

"I shall never forget that time at Mansfield, Ohio, when Ned Castle was appearing in Shakespearing roles. 'As You Like It' was the play. Had a big feller named Muggins for *Charles, the rastler.* Ned played *Orlando.* Sizable, Ned was, but no match for Muggins, of course, who was a professional rastler. Muggins's having to be throwed every night by Ned made him very tired. It just 'bout run him into insanity. He was afraid folks wouldn't understand. While they were getting ready, he would stand and wink and scowl at the augence, and pat his hands up and down like you'd

toss a baby, just to show what he could do with the other. Then, when the rastle begun, he would just stand still, and sort o' roll his head and keep winking, while Ned pushed and h'isted and puffed; and then bime-by he would give a kind of scornful groan and fall over disgusted. Sometimes when they was carrying him out, and he was specially mad, he would cock up his eye at the gallery, and say, in a sort of dumb whisper, with his lips and face, 'Dead fake!' Then he would stand round the wings and explain to the stage-hands how he would like to take Ned up and shove his head down through the stage-floor, and leave his legs waving like a willer-tree.

"Well, naturally, after a while Ned got tired of this kind of thing. When we struck Mansfield there was a professional rastler named Burke giving exhibitions there. Ned sent for him, smuggled him into his dressing-room, made him up like himself, and took him on for the rastling scene. When he stepped to one side to take off his cloak, he slipped behind a tree, and Burke walked out. Muggins was so busy gagging the augence that he never seen nothing.

Burke went at him like a pup at a rabbit-skin. Lifted him right off his feet the first grab. 'O excellent young man!' says *Rosalind.* Started to turn him over in the air. 'I would I were invisible, to catch the strong feller by the leg,' says *Celia.* But Muggins was game, and onto his job all right. Burke didn't turn him. Muggins came down on one foot, and wrapped the other leg around Burke's waist like a bore-consticktor. 'O excellent young man!' says *Rosalind.* 'I would I were invisible, to catch the strong feller by the leg,' says *Celia,* there being nothing else for 'em to say in the lines, and knowing they'd got to keep up their business while it lasted.

"Well, the way them fellers had it round that stage was a caution. First one in the air, then the other; pull and haul; jump and jerk; twist and turn; their teeth set and their eyes glaring; *Juke Frederick* and the *Courtjers* dodging 'em, and betting quietly on the result, and *Rosalind* chirping out, 'O excellent young man!' and *Celia* coming in with 'I would I were invisible, to pull the strong feller by the leg!' Grape-vine twists, half-nelsons, back-heels, strangle-locks, and

every catch and holt you ever heard tell of, with the augence yelling like sixty, and a sporty chap with a plaid shirt standing up in the fifth row selling pools on the event. And *Rosalind* and *Celia* working right along on full time—'O excellent young man!'—'I would I were invisible, to yank the strong feller by the leg!'

"The two men made more noise than the thunder-machine, and kicked up the dust like a whirlwind, trees a-falling, the *Juke's* crown on the foot-lights, and *Touchstone* knocked over and his ankle sprained. I thought it was going to last all night, when suddenly, just as *Rosalind* piped up for the seventh time with her 'O excellent young man!' Burke got some sort of a patent twist on Muggins and throwed him so it shook the building. Then he let go and decamped, and Ned come up and stood over Muggins, who wasn't seeing anything much except stars. 'No more, no more,' says the *Juke*, catching his cue. 'Yes, I beseech your Grace; I am not yet well breathed,' says Ned, fresh as a morning-glory. And Muggins heard him, and looked up, and says he, thick and deep, 'Great heavings! who'd

a-thought he had it in him!' Then they bore him out — *had* to — there was no walk left in Muggins. And for the rest of the season he was the best *Charles* I ever seen, and never give no more trouble.

"Then another recollection that will stand by me is of when I was with Jim Hamilton's company. The legit again, but the rip-roaringest time you ever heard tell of. Though it was all Jim's fault. Jim Hamilton was the most particular manager I ever knowed. *Never* satisfied. Kick — why, do you know when we got a new La Tour thunder machine Jim found fault with it. 'Call that thunder, do you?' he asked, disgusted as a man who's come in on a free ticket; 'think that's thunder, hey? Why, I can eat a mince pie and go to sleep on a folding bed and *snore* better thunder than that!' He was always finding fault, too, because the actors didn't soliloquize loud enough. 'Talk up, talk up,' he used to say, 'the augence will think you're speaking to somebody 'stead of solil'quizing.'

"The play we was out with was 'Romeo and Juliet,' and Jim just about worried himself sick over the moon. The stage man-

ager didn't want any moon at all, but Jim wouldn't listen to it. So we got the best in the market — Scott & Thompson's patent adjustable moon. But Jim swore he could make a better moon with a punkin and a taller candle. Then we tried the U. S. Moon Co.'s moon, reversible, the other side representing the sun, but Jim kicked it out, saying that he just as soon have a yellow dog hung up by the tail as that moon. He vowed he'd make a moon himself, and he did.

"And I must say that Jim's moon was a good one, too. I don't believe one of these here 'stronomers could have told it from the genuine — not without a telescope a rod long, anyhow. In fact, it seemed to me it laid over the regular moon in some ways — clearer complected and sharper edges. It used to just make the augence sneeze and button up their coats, it give such a feeling of night air, you know. If Jim had been content to push it up a little and leave it stationary as the scene went on and people sort of got interested in something else he would have been all right, but, no, that moon had to keep rising

all the time and a-sailing along in the heavings whether anybody was looking at it or not. Jim had enough machinery about it to run a woollen factory. Got a patent onto it — advertised it in the professional papers as the Hamilton Diana of the Night, an Automatic Moon; with either Low or High Gear; and with an Attachment allowing it to be snapped back to the Horizon for a new start in the case of long Scenes. Ring to go round it without extra charge. You see, Jim always held that if there was a storm in the third act then there ought to be a ring around the moon in the second act, 'cause a ring means coming bad weather.

"Well, it worked all right for some time, but one night at Kokomo the sprocket wheel slipped and Jim's moon went to cutting up monkey shines. *Romeo* was up on the balcony, and him and *Juliet* was carrying on as usual, when suddenly that moon shot up to the flies at about a mile a minute. Then down it went four times as fast. You see, Jim's patent fly-back had got in its work. Up she went again, and back she went again, whizzing like a rocket, with the

machinery rattling and rumbling behind the scenes. Them lovers on the balcony caught on right away, and I saw they was pretty nervous, and kept watching it, 'specially when it got to throwing out smoke and sparks, and sizzing and sputtering. 'Lady,' says *Romeo*, 'by yender blessed automatic moon,'— Jim had changed the wording a little —'by yender blessed automatic moon I swear, That tips with silver all the fruit tree tops,—' and this was the cue for *Juliet* to bust in with, 'O, swear not by the automatic, the inconstant automatic, That monthly changes in her circling orb, Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.' And right here that blamed old moon exploded like a bum-shell, and chunks flew in all directions. *Romeo* got a sizable piece on his jaw, and he skun down the ladder like a cat, just having presence of mind enough to holler back, 'You're right, my love, that there moon ain't the proper thing to swear by!' but if you could a-heard him after he got out in the wings swear *at* it you'd a-remembered it as long as you lived. His remarks was more jerking and explosive than the moon."

XVII

CORONER RAFFLEBONE

Discovering, Saturday afternoon, that, contrary to his usual practice, my printer had not drawn his entire salary during the week, ten cents at a time, for obvious purposes, and that there was money due him which I did not have, I wrote out the past-due subscription bill of Mr. Milo Bush, and started forth with the hope of making up the deficit. I found Mr. Bush seated on the counter in Shanks's grocery store, engaged in the study of air currents, a scientific inquiry carried on by close observation of the smoke from a fierce eruption in an ancient corn-cob pipe. I handed him the bill, which he read with unfeigned interest. Then he looked up with an animated expression, and said,

"By George, young man, reminds me of old Doc Rafflebone, who come out here in '78."

"Yes?" I replied, with mild concern, as,

with some alarm, I observed him carelessly fold the bill and thrust it into his pocket.

"Made me think of Doc soon as I seen it," went on Mr. Bush. "*You* never knowed Doc — his wife chased him out of the Territory before your time. You're a good bit of a tenderfoot, though you ain't so bad, either. The average tenderfoot don't know enough to get up when he falls down, but I'll say for you, young man, that you *do*. You have your weak p'ints, of course, physically *and* mentally, but, as I often say to the boys when they are a-running of you down, says I, 'The cuss ain't so big a fool as he looks'— just like that I put it to 'em, many's the time."

"But your friend, the Doctor?" I observed, in an insinuating tone.

"Coming to him, young man," he returned, as he punched down the ashes in his pipe with a finger a half-inch shorter than it should have been, apparently, from its black and charred condition, having been gradually burned off through long years of such service. "Old Doc Rafflebone. Come from Peoria. Tried to shake his wife, but she got here on the next stage. Might

as well tried to shake his dispersition. When that woman called off, Doc danced, you bet! Used to sign hisself Dr. Seneca Rafflebone, H. M. P., C. A. D. N., which meant Hoss and Mule Physician, Calls Answered Day and Night. That's what Doc was edecated for — a veteran. He was a success with hosses, too, but he never seemed to get onto the fine p'ints of doctoring *folks*. The trouble was in graderating the doses. His idea was that if a hoss weighing twelve hundred required a certain dose, a man weighing two hundred needed just one-sixth of the amount."

Mr. Bush paused, puffed strenuously at his pipe, but failing in a responsive cloud, abstractedly drew my bill from his pocket, lit it at the stove, and applied the torch to the slumbering bowl, vigorously stoking it meantime with his finger.

"The theory seems sound," I observed, with a weak show of cheerfulness.

"Sound as a nut. But the difficulty was here: the man might weigh a hundred and sixty-nine, or a hundred and forty-two. An A1 'rithmetic scholar could probably figure it out even in this case, and fix up the dose,

but Doc wa'n't more'n 'bout Z14, or thereabouts, on 'rithmetic, and these odd-size men bothered him so much that finally he refused to treat any man that didn't weigh an even two hundred. He stuck to this till after he was elected coroner; then he didn't care, 'cause when he couldn't treat a man no more in his private professional capac'ty he could sock it to him in his official capac'ty, and collect one bill from the widder and the other from the county.

"But by-and-by a reg'lar M. D. doctor come out, and Doc Rafflebone's practice fell off. He kept the confidence of hoss-owners, but the more loving and better class of parents didn't go to him for their children. He never had been no success with children anyhow, owing to their uncertain and mixed-up sizes. The new Doc not only busted up Rafflebone's practice, but knocked out his coroner business pretty well too, because without Rafflebone's practice sudden death become just about unknown in Bon Pierre County. But Doc was enterprising — you never *seen* an enterprisinger man in your life. He used to go about with a brace of extra six-shooters in

his pocket, and if he met a man that was anyways mad he would pull out one of the guns and offer to lend it to him, with the advice to go and shoot the other feller. 'You know the old proverb,' Doc would say to the man, '"when a pusson riles you, pop it to him, and then count a hundred."' Doc worked up a few cases this way, but not many. Then Fourth of July come along, and a sham battle was arranged as one of the attractions of the day. Doc got at the ammunition the night before and substituted a lot of ball cartridges for the blanks; but the boys got onto his game. This discouraged him some'at, but he didn't give up, nohow. Doc Rafflebone was Old Man Enterprise hisself!

"Soon after the Fourth there come along a circus. It was the first circus that ever struck the Territory, and a good show, though the zebra wouldn't wash. It rained the night before and his cage leaked, and it come out that he wa'n't no fast-color zebra. That there zebra, to tell the honest trooth, was just about one hundred per cent. Rocky Mountain burro. Doc went around to the proprietor of the show and wanted

to treat the zebra. Let on he had a way to set the stripes so they wouldn't either run or fade, and offered to make 'em red, white, and blue, and give the critter a yellow tail, and make one ear green and t'other one purple. The proprietor thought Doc was trying to josh him, so he kicked him out. That proprietor didn't know what he was a-kicking.

"Doc made up his mind to have revenge. Fust he tried to get up a row betwixt some cowboys that was feeling pretty comfortable and the circus man but it didn't work. Then he seen the side-show, and went over. 'How are yer animals?' says Doc to the man. 'All well except the two-headed girl, which has a cough in her left throat,' says the man. 'I am Doc Rafflebone, H. M. P., C. A. D. N.,' says Doc, 'and I can cure that cough.' The man wouldn't pass him, and after argeing a spell, Doc bought a ticket and went in. He didn't find any two-headed girl, nor nothing else much except a mermaid, and that wa'n't alive — fact, young man, dead mermaid! Doc was plumb beat; but just then he seen a sign, 'Mummy of Rameses I.— From Egypt,' and he exam-

ines it. Then an idea struck him, and he slapped his leg and turned to a band of us that was a-sizing up the mermaid, and says he, 'Boys, there's suspicious circumstances connected with this here mummy — we'll just hold an inquest on him!'

"So you may snatch my buttons, young man, if that wa'n't percisely what we done — sot on old Rameses I., and I was foreman of the jury. The proprietor come in and begun kicking. 'Have you got a certificate from the physician what attended the party in his last illness?' says Doc, sweet as butter. 'Thunder! no,' says the proprietor. 'Then the inquest proceeds,' says Doc. The proprietor kept making hisself obnoxious, so Doc fined him ten dollars for contempt of court, and he shut up. We took the afternoon for it, and sifted the thing to the bottom. We summoned twenty or thirty witnesses, mostly the boys, picking out them that we thought needed the fees and would keep the money in circulation. None of 'em seemed to know much about the case, though Jim Shaw thought he had seen the party in St. Louis two years before, where he were a-lecturing

about the 'Effect on the System of Blue Glass'; but Jim didn't know nothing concerning what had killed him. So, after doing all we could, we brought in a verdict that 'The party come to his death from causes unknown to this here jury'; and Bon Pierre County being poor, we soaked the costs to the proprietor. 'Mebby he'll let me treat that there cotton zebra of his'n next time,' says Doc.

"That's all, young man. I'm a-comin' into yer office some day next week to tell you how you want to handle this here tariff question in yer paper, and I sha'n't charge you a cent for it!"

XVIII

"SIMMONS"

We got him on subscription. Sooner or later we got everything on subscription — even money; not much cord-wood, however, because it was a prairie country. Still a man named Parkinson once brought in some wood neatly sawed, stove length. He did it under protest, however, his subscription being back two years, and we threatening to sue. So Parkinson brought in a cord, making unpleasant remarks as he unloaded it, and scattering it around in a barbaric manner. That man Parkinson was an enemy of mankind.

The fire was low the next morning at breakfast time. Hilda tossed in four or five sticks of the Parkinson fuel. There followed a series of the most terrific explosions. Perhaps I ought to mention the appearance of the cat in the dining-room first. Anyhow the cat would have reached us before the sound if her tail had not been

so big that it impeded her progress through the doors. That cat was frightened, and passed on through the parlor, out a front window and on across the landscape. Hilda came next, her front hair singed. Bang, bang! went the reports in the kitchen. A neighbor looked in and said our chimney was squirting fire and ashes — possibly lava. Something, too, he said, just went out the front window. My teeth were chattering, but I was bound to be calm and said, "Yes, the maid was popping corn in the kitchen." Hilda denied it. "Aye tank," she said, "de man dat talk loud and say he was no dog-goned sucker, dat he plooged de gunpowders in de wood." So it was indeed. What shall we say of a man who thus tries to blow up his editor? As for that inconsiderate cat, she never was seen in those parts again. I have always had a theory that she moved on in an absolutely straight line, which, owing to the curvature of the earth, finally threw her off into space, and she became a miniature comet. Her tail was right for comet purposes anyhow.

Simmons came on subscription also, but

willingly. Jim Simmons of Pelican Lake was not the man to torpedo a journalist. I remember how nervous he was when he came into the office, and how he fidgeted about. "Did you ever live in the South?" he finally blurted out. I told him "No." He seemed somewhat relieved.

"Do you — do you know anything about swine?" he went on.

"Swine have four feet," I answered — "one on each corner. They root and squeal and eventually become pork."

"Yes, yes," returned Jim, "but do you know about the different breeds?"

"No." He seemed further relieved.

"Would you — would you," he went on cautiously, "know a Durham swine from a Cleveland Bay swine?"

"No." He drew a deep breath, and most of his anxiety was gone.

"Did you ever hear of the razorback breed of swine?" he said firmly.

"Never," I answered. Jim slapped his leg and smiled. Then he leaned closer and said:

"Young man, I've got something for you on subscription — something that you don't

get every day, not by a long shot! Out in that there box in my wagon I've got for you a genuine — Alabama — razor — back —swine!" I rose up and took Jim Simmons's hand solemnly. Then he said I was to come out to the wagon and see the swine.

"It's a warm day. Why didn't you bring him in a crate instead of a box, Jim?" I asked.

"Ah, you see, you don't know the razorback breed. Airtight is the word in transporting razorbacks. Peek in there now, will you?" And he raised the lid a trifle.

"Yes, Jim," I said, "airtight is the word. I'll have a glass pen made, with a top which screws on like a fruit jar."

"Now there you go again," answered Jim. "The razorback don't need any pen at all. That swine will just sleep under the office and pick up his living around town."

"But the pound-master, Jim?"

"The pound nothing! Double j'inted greyhounds fired out a cannon couldn't catch that swine." He took the cover off the box, and the pig hopped out and lit on

the ground. "Notice how thin he is," continued Jim admiringly.

"Yes, I see," I replied. "I'll tie a string around his middle and fly him for a Chinese kite."

"You could do it!" was Jim's enthusiastic answer. Then he added: "You've got a prize in that there swine. There is some folks around here that *think* they've got razorbacks, but they ain't pure breed. They may be *part* razorback, but there is other blood in them. This one is a full-blooded Alabama razorback and the only one in the territory. He's *registered*. I disremember his number, but he's in the books of the American Razorback Swine Association. Don't be afraid to make a test case of him with the pound-master," and Jim drove away. The creature stood there in a defiant attitude, looking at me. I approached, saying, "Good piggy." With a snort he flopped around on his forward legs and disappeared down the street in a cloud of dust. "He's as fast as the cat," I mused, "but not so graceful."

I went into the office and wrote a glowing item about the razorback. I referred

to him as "a pleasing pachyderm" and spoke proudly of the purity of his breed. "Thanks to the generosity of the genial Jim Simmons, one of nature's noblemen," I wrote, "ye editor is now the possessor of the only pure bred razorback in the territory. If any of our readers hear a whizzing sound passing their doors, they may know it is our porker going by. What are you going to do about it, Mr. Pound Master?" I even ran in a little anecdotical item elsewhere, telling how Jim, when he lived in Arkansas and worked for an uncle named Green, who kept a store, used to sign receipts thus: "Green, per Simmons." There was no truth in it, but I knew it would please Jim.

Mark ye the spite, the cruelty of human nature! I was happy. I knew nothing about swine. I had believed all that Jim said. I really thought that in that pig I had something rare and valuable. But when the paper appeared the townspeople came in, many that called themselves my friends, and told me the truth — that the razorback is a degenerate scrub unworthy serious attention; that he furnishes but one

thing for human use, and that is bristles, and not many of them, they being mostly worn off by the rapidity of his flight through the air. Some of them said, too, that there was no such thing as the American Razorback Swine Association. For weeks I inquired after Jim from his neighbors. They said he seemed to be going to the other town altogether nowadays. We named the pig Simmons in grateful remembrance.

Shall I ever forget the trouble that Simmons caused me? He lived under the office, as Jim said he would. Mentally Simmons was bright, but he was a moral burden. Often when I was writing, perhaps on the "Stability of Our City's Growth," Simmons would begin to scratch his back on the floor joists and shake the whole building. He pied galleys of type in this way. Again, he would come around in front and poke his head in the door and snort at me defiantly and ungratefully. He had no means of knowing what I was writing, and I thought it unkind and malicious of him. Sometimes it seemed as if he hated and despised me. On other occasions it

appeared as if he would in his poor, dumb way call me — brother! Once I went, as member of a committee, to the station to help welcome an eastern capitalist who was coming with a view of investing money in the place. Simmons followed close behind, like a dog, and peered around my legs at the visitor and grunted scornfully, as who should say: "Hah, old moneybags! What are *you?*" "Your — er — hogs seem familiar," observed the man. The rest of the committee turned their backs on me. "It's the editor's," explained the leader. "Don't mind either of 'em."

It was worth the price of admission to see Simmons root. Your ordinary hog roots disconnectedly, with a push in this direction and in that, a down thrust and an uplift, with pauses as he sniffs and explores for possible food. Otherwise Simmons. He would insert his snout in the ground and then walk straight ahead, plowing a long furrow, throwing the soil to either side as the bow of a steamboat throws the water. He was not looking for food — simply taking a constitutional. But he could root in one spot if the occasion demanded. The

Baptist church stood on four blocks of wood, after the manner of the country. I think Simmons was a Methodist — anyhow he was strongly opposed to the Baptists. He kept at their foundation till one block toppled over and that corner of the building went down a foot, the diagonally opposite corner going up the same distance; during evening service, of course. The congregation slid down in the lower corner like the pieces in a backgammon board. I heard Simmons's back scrape on the floor as he came whisking home. Then there followed a long series of satisfied grunts. He had fixed those Baptists at last.

When we gave the eastern capitalist a reception in Bagley's hall, Simmons planted himself four-square in the middle of the street in front and squealed like 10,000 unoiled wheelbarrows. He had a reversible voice. When he expelled the air, it produced a nerve destroying shrilling. When he inhaled it, you heard a raucous rattle, blood-curdling and fearsome. The moneyed man didn't stay. Simmons chased the train half way to the next station, speaking his mind freely. He had fixed the capitalist.

The bills which I had to pay for damage done by Simmons were something disquieting. It got so that if any man in town needed a dollar he would come to me and say Simmons had done something, and I would give him the money. One day a man came in with a bill for an entire patch of potatoes uprooted by Simmons. I was out of funds. The man said he must have something, and that quick. He was angry and abusive. I told him the only thing I could give him was a load of wood. He took it. It happened to be the Parkinson wood. This made more trouble. It was becoming a serious problem what I should do with Simmons.

Two days before the Fourth of July Major Grigsby, a local nuisance, came into the office. The Major was always some sort of an agent — book, apple tree, patent wash boiler or what not. "Sah," said the Major, "as you have announced in your valuable papah, we are to have a grand celebration of the glorious Fourth in this town. I have been honored with an app'intment on the Committee on Sports and Pastimes of the Pop-u-lace. We have ar-

ranged for a hoss trot, sah; a baseball game, sah; a greased pole, sah, and other amusements, sah, such as it is believed will appeal to the common people, sah, the bull-work of the nation, sah. We lack but one thing, my deah sah, a greased pig. I have been delegated the Committee on Greased Pig." He hesitated. I arose, and there were tears in my eyes. "Major," I said, grasping his hand, "take Simmons!"

"You do me proud, sah," answered the Major, with feeling. "Thank you, sah. We will take Simmons!"

At 11 o'clock on the glorious day Simmons, well greased, was brought out to the race track where the exercises were being held. It being feared that no one would chase him for himself alone a dollar bill, generously contributed by Mayor Southwick, was tied to his tail. When he was released, a dozen ambitious citizens started in pursuit, the Major among the others. Around and around rushed Simmons, the crowd close behind, but never quite coming up to him. Suddenly, with a defiant squeal, he started across the prairie straight for the west. The crowd followed, the Major leading. Soon

they grew dim in the distance. Then gradually the pursuers could be seen dropping out and returning. This kept up till they were all back except the Major. With the aid of good field-glasses he could be seen tearing on 20 feet behind Simmons till they sank below the horizon. It cast a pall over the rest of the day, everybody fearing that they might come back. But they did not, nor was either ever heard of again. It has never seemed possible that they could have joined the cat in interstellar space, but I always think of them as still running on, on, Simmons a little ahead, waving the $1 bill.

XIX

MR. BUSH'S CIRCUS

During one of the reminiscential interludes indulged in by Mr. Milo Bush, he told of an alleged visit of a circus to the town some years before. The instructive tale, which from the impressive manner of its delivery, he seemed to think possessed of edifying and perhaps even of educational qualities, ran as follows:

"It was Starbuck's Allied Tentatorial Aggravation, a Gigantic, Awe-producing Spectacle of Wonders from the Slimy Deep, the Higeous Jungle, the Bone-strewn Desert, and the Roaring Caverns of the upper air, whence blow the Seven Vampire Winds of heaven seeking whom they may destroy. Them was the words of the bills. One ticket admits to all this grand tautological presentation of upas-like monsters snatched from yearth's remotest corners and conveyed to your doors. Don't forget to bring the little ones. Children in arms welcome.

Special inducements to famblys fetching twins and triplets.

"Well, when the doors opened, the whole town was on hand. We found some things not up to the bills — the unicorn had only one horn, for instance — but we were not inclined to find fault. We looked at the living monsters from the blistering quarters of this year awful and pizen-loaded globe and approved of 'em. We noticed that some of the horrible beasts of prey had the hair worn off of 'em in spots, but we jedged they was moulting. Then we passed into the main tent.

"The performance was first-rate. All would have gone well if Mayor Patty hadn't tried to ride the trick mule. Close personal and political friends tried to dissuade him; but, no, he would ride that mule. The mule throwed him and cracked his head agin the centre pole. He was mad, and went out and made complaint before Jedge Malgrave, having peeked through a hole in the tent and seen that the zebra only had stripes on the side towards the augence. He charged Starbuck, the sole proprietor, with obtaining money under false pretenses.

"Well, they brought Starbuck before the Jedge and convicted him, having the zebra in court, his public side marked 'Exhibit A,' and his private-life side labelled 'Exhibit B.' The Jedge talked it over with Mayor Patty and others who might have some igee as to about how much Starbuck had, and then fined him $500. Starbuck said he couldn't pay, and they put him in the lockup. That settled the Allied Aggravation, and it went to pieces right in our midst.

"When we seen we'd got it on our hands we called a public meeting to consider the situation. Lawyer Kingsley made a speech. 'Gentlemen,' says he, 'we suddenly find a large number of artists, recently engaged in amoosing and instructing the crowned heads of Europe, and likewise a number of monsters ensnared from the suspicious parts of the yearth, thrown upon our charity. Shall it be said that the people of this city allowed these artists and these monsters to suffer? Palsied be this hand and may this tongue, gents, cleave to the roof of this mouth, if such shall be the case! I move you, sir, that a fund be raised to pay

for the keep of these deserving artists and monsters, and also that volunteers be called for to look after them.'

"The motion was carried. Joe Reynolds said he would take the hippopotamus if somebody would help furnish hay. Tom Perkins offered to look after one tiger. Jason Brack said he would board an artist. It was decided to send the sacred cow to Elder Babbitt, of the First Baptist Church, since she was said to be a good milker, and would pay for her keep. It was arranged to board the fat lady and the other members of her sex at the hotel. Jim Reed said he would take the ostrich. His igee was to set her on two hundred hens' eggs. Somebody said he would take the camel, and another man offered to board the ringmaster. I felt I ought to do something, so I riz up, and says I: 'Mr. Cheerman and feller-citizens,— I agree with the previous speakers that it behoofs us to do something for these unfortunates. We must make these artists and these monsters feel that in our buzzums beats the warm chords of Christian charity. They are our brothers, Mr. Cheerman — that is, the artists are, and

mebby some of the monsters. Now is the time to show what stuff we are made of. For my part, Mr. Cheerman, I stand ready to take to my home and to tenderly care for the Egyptian mummy. He was no relative of mine, and I never seen him before, but if he shall ever want for proper care, then, gentlemen, palsied be *both* of these hands, and may this tongue know naught in the future but the touch of higeous upas-like ice-water!' I sot down amid deefening applause and cries of 'Brave, oh!' 'What's the matter of Bush?' 'Mark the perfect man!' 'Three cheers for Old Man Charity!' Blushing to the roots of my hair, I went out, shouldered the Egyptian party, which I took to be a king, and carried him home and stood him in the pantry.

"It was exciting times in this town while we had that there circus on our hands. We got some good out of it, however; we sot the steam-piano up in the Methodist church, and doubled the congregation. Jim Reed complained that he couldn't make the ostrich set, and that she'd picked off all his door-knobs and et 'em, and he wanted to exchange her for an artist; but we made

him stick to his bargain. Hank Shoemaker said that the tattoed man which he had for his guest leaned agin the parlor wall-paper, and the design come out and struck into the paper; but we told him he must stand it. The lions and tigers kept breaking loose and running round town and scaring people and getting under folks's houses. You could hear 'em bumping their heads up agin the floor and lashing their sides with their tails. The way they yowled nights was a caution.

"Some of the artists went to work. The ringmaster got a job as primary-school teacher, and the clown began working in an undertaking establishment. He was one of the best hands I ever seen at giving the necessary directions to the friends of the deceased. He was that solemn-looking that strangers used to take him for one of the mourners, and sometimes at the more swell funerals he would set with the relatives of the departed just to add to the heft of the gloom. And all the time the king stood there in my pantry and never made the least trouble. When others complained about their charges, I said to 'em: 'Do I kick

about the king? Do I find fault? No, sir! Dooty, gentlemen; sacred dooty. Virtue is its own reward.' The preacher, with the sacred cow giving sixteen quarts of milk per day, was the only other man that wasn't finding fault about something. The contrast between the sacred cow, paying for her keep and eight quarts besides, and that ostrich, standing about pulling tenpenny nails out of the side of Jim's barn with a loud squeak, was very painful, especially to Jim. The minister used to p'int out the difference between a sacred and a profane animal, though, strictly speaking, Jim was the profane animal, his remarks being scandalous every time he heard another nail squeak.

"All the time the sole proprietor staid in jail, cheerful as the trick mule. Mostly the artists remained hopeful too, except the bearded lady, who became disgusted, and walked out of town. He said no bearded lady with a true love for his art would submit to living on charity.

"The monster that made the most trouble was the elephant. He wandered all over town, and trampled down folks's gardens,

broke sidewalks, and knocked over fences. He was worse than the giraffe, which used to reach in second-story windows and eat up the pillar-shams. Nobody would have the elephant, so we concluded to put him in the jail along with the sole proprietor. Some said there wasn't room, and that one or the other of 'em would get mashed, but we thought we'd try it. So we opened the door and backed him in, I sort of wondering about the sole proprietor, but not daring to look. The elephant's head wouldn't go in, so we shut the lower half of the door, and left his head out the upper half, which it just filled, so he could look around at the bootiful scenery. Then we went off, I still with some misgivings about the sole proprietor, and saying to myself: 'Is it well with thy brother?' and, 'Would *you* like to be in jail alone with your conscience and one large elephant?' But I hardened my heart, and went home and shook hands again with the king.

"The next morning the jail was gone. We seen something bobbing about off on the prairie about half a mile, and we rid out. It was the jail being walked off by the ele-

phant, who was swinging his trunk, chewing his cud, and gazing at the elegant landscape aforesaid. I stooped down and looked under the edge of the building. My heart give a glad leap to see the legs of the sole proprietor moving as he walked along under the elephant. We jedged it was a good way to get rid of both of 'em, so we went back. The craft disappeared below the horizon about noon.

"That afternoon Mayor Patty called another public meeting. Addressing the assembled multitood, he said: 'I think I voice the sentiments of the community when I say that we have had enough of this here circus. We have now got rid of the two worst curses — that unruly elephant and the sole proprietor. Peace to their tracks! I now, feller-citizens, have a most delicate matter to disclose to you,' and the Mayor blushed like I do sometimes. 'Nothing less, gentlemen, than the marriage of the fat lady and your humble servant. We shall then gather up the circus, and my wife and I shall go out with it hand in hand as sole proprietors. The sacred cow will remain with Elder Babbitt as his

fee for performing the bootiful and impressive ceremony here and now on this rosgum.'

"Which the elder done; and so we got rid of the circus at last."

XX

IN THE STUDIO

The studio which is inhabited by the artist Max and his friend Paul, the poet, is on the top floor of an old red brick house near Washington Square. It is a large front room — the "square room" of the advertising landlady — and at the back is an alcove, which serves as a bedroom for Max; while the little room which opens off the large one at the side — the "hall bedroom" of the landlady — is the dormitory of Paul. There are skylights over all three, and in the hall, and in the back rooms on this floor — so many, indeed, that if you ascend to the roof, of a warm summer night, you shall say that you are among a lot of chicken-coops.

Great confusion reigns in the studio proper, and rolls over into the other rooms. There is an immense tiger-skin, not on the floor, but on the wall. There is a gigantic fish-net, not on the wall, but on the floor.

A lay-figure, in great distress, stands in one corner; a plaster Venus in another; an anatomical figure in still another; a suit of armor in the fourth. A tall clock, the minute-hand revolving once in three-quarters of an hour, and the other always hanging limp at VI, is edging out from the wall as if about to gather up its scant skirts and walk over and embrace the lay-figure. There are couches and easy-chairs scattered about where they are most in the way, an old sideboard, a gas-stove, a lot of ancient weapons, a brass kettle as big as a half-barrel, a last year's calendar, a tally-ho horn, a broken golf club, twenty unfinished pictures, one finished picture, a stuffed owl, a live black cat, a pair of wooden shoes, a bottle of milk, several Chinese umbrellas, a geranium in a pot, plenty of books, a stag's head, a typewriter, a score of plaster casts, a half-dozen Chianti bottles, a bicycle tire, a coffee-pot, a waste-basket, quite empty, but with paper enough all about on the floor to fill it five times over; there are also ten thousand other things, which it would be tiresome to name, and over all a peppering of pipes, of every kind yet in-

vented by man. Alas! we tremble violently to think of the fate of shrieking art and poetry without tobacco!

It is in the afternoon; Max is at work on a black-and-white illustration. His face is buoyant with hope.

"Let me see," he muses; "this was promised for a week ago yesterday. They said they wanted it by a week ago to-day, must have it six days ago, and would not take it if it was not done five days ago; they really hoped for it four days ago; I tried to finish it three days ago, expected to finish it two days ago, the limit in my mind was yesterday, bet Paul a dollar I'd get through to-day, hope to finish to-morrow, may have it done by the day after, must have it off by the day after that, shall just about apply the finishing touches on the day after *that*. Well, well, it doesn't matter! Ah, but that letter was encouraging!" Lays down his pen and adds, "Where the blazes did I put that letter?"

The door opens softly, and enter Paul. "Hello, old man!" he calls. "Do you know, I've just got a letter that makes the whole world seem glorious!"

"You don't say so!" answers Max. "What a coincidence! I just got a letter of the same kind. It means money in my pocket."

"Eh? Well, we need it."

"Yes, yes," answers Max dryly, "*we* do."

"That's what I said. Who's it from, anyhow?"

"Some duffer I never heard of, at something-ty-something east or west Somewhere street, offering me $200 for the original of my 'Windy Crossing' picture."

"Good heavens! Why, you only asked $100!"

"I know; and fifty would have taken it."

"And that night you lost your gold shirt stud and had to wear a brass-headed tack, you'd have even cut that price."

"Dear boy, he could have had it that night for another shirt stud. They cost sixty cents, you know. Where the deuce did I put that letter, anyhow? I want to see what that address was." He begins rummaging violently. "Hello! here's that tube of ivory-white I looked for two hours yesterday."

"Seems 'sif you might ask about my letter."

"A thousand pardons, old boy! What is it?"

"Can't you guess?"

"What, not from Marcellete?"

"It is. She says I may call. And I was right about her name."

"I congratulate you, dear Paul. I know how you feel. What's her last name?"

"I didn't notice."

"And her address?"

"I'll look and see." So Paul begins rummaging his pockets, throwing out great bundles of papers, letters, and so forth, on the table.

"You'll need your dress suit," observes Max.

"Of course. I'll take it out of pawn with part of that $200 we're going to get."

"Ah, I forgot that! *Where* did I put that letter?" He keeps on rummaging, while Paul continues to jettison the cargo in his pockets. "Oh, here's that diminishing-glass! I just sent Maggie down to DuBois's for another," continues Max.

"It's funny about that letter," complains

Paul, beginning to paw over the stack on the table before him.

"No funnier than it is about mine," answers Max, impatiently, coming up and helping him paw.

A knock is heard at the door. "Only Maggie," says Paul, in a whisper. "Come in!" he calls in a loud, authoritative tone. A down-at-the-heel girl with her hair held up by half a quill pen enters.

"Mister Max, ould DuBois says he'll send you no glass without seeing the color of your money."

"Good. I've found the old one." Then, with dignity, "Go back, Maggie, and tell him that this ends our business relations."

"It beats all what became of that letter," says Paul, again beginning to explore his pockets.

"Not half so strange as what became of mine," answers Max. "Did you take it out when you first came in?"

"Possibly. It may be anywhere." They both begin overhauling the whole studio together.

"Here's the shoe-horn we were looking for the other night when we had the ice-

cream," calls Paul, as he emerges from beneath a couch.

"And here's your sonnet under this mat — the one you were going to send to the *Manhattan Magazine*, you know."

"Good. Put it under the coffee-pot; there's a variation of it there now."

"It beats me about that letter," goes on Max, making another assault on the table.

"I know what we need, though," says Paul, coming up and re-enforcing him.

"What is it?"

"A smoke."

"The very thing! But have we any tobacco?"

"Certainly. There in the tea-canister." They each seize the nearest pipe, and fill it at the canister.

"Have you a match?" asks Paul.

"No. Have you?"

"Of course not! Maggie!" There is no response.

"Why, the gas is burning yet; I forgot to turn it out this morning. This will do," and he steps to the table, tears off a strip of paper, rolls it up, and soon has his pipe

giving out great clouds. Paul does the same, and they sit down opposite.

"It's odd about both of those letters," says Paul.

"But they must be here somewhere."

"Yes; we shall find them. I feel certain of that. We *must* find them. My whole future happiness depends on mine."

"Ah, we shall find them after a good smoke."

"Yes, we shall find both of them. Remember how we lost the fire-shovel?"

"I fancy I do! Gone two weeks, and then we found it under your pillow."

"That was Maggie's fault. I have always told her to air the pillows."

"We oughtn't to pay her our share for such service."

"But we don't, old man!"

There is a loud knock at the door. They lay down their pipes, and Paul tiptoes into the small room and peeps through the key-hole. He comes back and whispers, "I can't made him out. Seems to have pretty good clothes. Maybe your man come after his picture." Max goes up a steep pair of stairs in the alcove and through the scuttle.

On the roof he peeps down the skylight. He is back in a moment.

"Bah!" he whispers, disgusted. "That collector from the grocer's. He looked up as I looked down, but I don't think he saw me." They relight their pipes with more paper torches, and after knocking twice more the man goes away.

"We can fix him out of that $200," observes Paul.

"I don't know. We need another rug. And it's ridiculous this trying to live without a little claret in the house."

"True. And we both need our watches. That clock has been acting queerly of late."

"I have suspected that clock ever since it struck 142 at half past four. But we can't have anything if we don't find my letter."

"Oh, yes; but mine is more important. Marcellete, Marcellete! I was right about her name, Max."

They both lay down their pipes and begin to rummage again.

"Here's my carmine," calls Max, as he over-turns the coal-scuttle. "I lost Saturday by looking for it."

A moment later Paul shouts "Hurrah!"

as he pulls his hand from the pocket of a buckskin hunting-jacket on the wall. "No! Thought I'd found it. It's nothing but that bill from the laundry we were looking for."

"No matter. We have had two duplicates since we lost that."

"True enough," and he tucks it behind a mirror.

"Here's our dish-towel in the grate," returns Max.

"You must have put it there. I'm too good a housekeeper for that."

"I never in my life had it in my hand."

"Neither did I."

"It was Maggie."

"We must cut down her wages."

By this time they are both back at the table, ransacking furiously. Then by common impulse they pick up their pipes, light them as before, and begin to discuss the situation earnestly. In their excitement their pipes go out frequently, but they rekindle them without stopping their talk.

"Six months ago I saw her first," sighs Paul at last — "six weary months. Now I am rewarded."

"If you can find the letter."

"I'll find it — never fear. But we must find yours first. I can't call without the suit."

"The letter is bound to turn up."

"It's odd you can't remember the address," says Paul.

"Oh, it was unspeakable! All figures and things."

"But the name?"

"Hold, I think I do remember the name."

"Quick — what?"

"Smith! We'll look it up in the directory."

Paul groans. "You are crazy. There are 120 pages of Smiths in the directory."

"Very well; we shall find the letter. Pass me that bit of paper; my pipe is out."

"Yes, we shall find them both. Just reach me the canister till I fill again."

"It's equally odd that you don't remember the name and address in your letter."

"I never looked at them. I saw that it was from her, and that I might call. It was enough."

It is now impossible to see six feet in the studio for tobacco smoke. There is a knock at the door, followed by a shrill whistle.

"The postman!" exclaims Max.

"Not so fast. That tailor's collector carries a postman's whistle now."

"True. But I know the postman's step."

"The tailor's man is a clever actor."

"I'll risk it." He pulls open the door. "I told you! Here are two letters." He thrusts them, unopened, into a Chinese lantern, and they both resume their seats and relight their pipes. Of course the letters are duns.

"The queer thing is that I had that letter not half an hour before you came in," observes Max.

"But I had my letter in my pocket when I did come in. I know it, because I — I kissed it on the stairs.

"It's probably in your pocket yet."

"It is not. I took it out, and instantly it became lost in the confusion of this detestable studio. I should live alone. A literary man must have order and system. I have a fine bump of order. Artists are shiftless creatures, and invariably slovenly housekeepers."

"You needn't talk! The place was in apple-pie order before you came here and buried everything in rejected manuscripts."

"Hah! They serve at least to hide certain unsaleable pictures."

"Who lost a five-dollar bill in his shoe, and wore it there two weeks?"

"I might as well have worn it there longer. You borrowed it immediately I found it."

They glare at each other. Then Max says: "My dear fellow, we won't quarrel. We must take a day and straighten up the place. I have wanted my banjo for a month."

"So you have. And I have not seen my copy of Keats since the day *Every Thursday* accepted my quatrain."

"Let's to the search again!"

They put down their pipes and begin a general upheaval of the studio. Manuscripts, letters, bills, pencil studies, frying-pans, slippers, plaster casts, amateur cameras, and other things fly through the air. Rugs are rolled up, and hangings pulled down. The suit of armor is overturned, and strikes the lay-figure in the stomach. An easel falls, and an unfinished picture flops on the floor.

"Here's your banjo under the fish-net!" calls Paul.

"Odd coincidence," returns Max; "I just found your Keats in the water-pitcher."

"And here's my list of rhymes on 'blossom.' By George, if I'd only had it yesterday!"

"And here's—" But there is a loud knock at the door, and they become as still as mice.

Away goes Paul to the roof, and after some time he returns. "Boy from Murdock's," he explains. "Suppose he had the pay for that short story of mine."

"Numskull! Why didn't you pound on the skylight and stop him?"

"I started to, but I saw the landlord coming up the stairs. There he is now;" and there is a knock which is like to break in a door panel. After three more the visitor stumps away. The two friends observe him through the corner of the window ruefully surveying the front of the house from the opposite side of the street. They sit down and again ignite their pipes.

"I shall move out of this hole to-morrow," says Paul.

"It will save me the trouble."

"You will live here till the Department of Public Works has to dig you out."

"You will fall naturally to the Department of Charities and Correction."

"What!"

"What!"

They sit on the edge of their chairs and glare till the smoke becomes so thick that they cannot see each other. Then says Paul,

"Old boy, I have an idea."

"Out with it."

"We shall never find those letters without help."

"I believe you. But where can we turn?"

"To Maggie, of course."

"Why didn't we think of it before? Maggie!"

Paul unlocks the door and Maggie enters. They state the difficulty, describe the letters, and implore her to assist them. She starts in, beginning with the table. They fall into a state of deep dejection.

"That letter was worth an even $200 to me, and perhaps much more. I might sell the man other originals. He must be an excellent judge of art."

"But your letter was nothing compared with mine. A million, yes, five million dollars would not have bought it from me."

"I fear we shall never see them."

"I fear you are right."

"But the mystery of it!"

"Yes, yes; yes, yes!"

"But it need not keep us from smoking. Hand me that scrap of paper, Maggie."

"And me that other one, Maggie."

Maggie takes them up. "Whoy, they're bits of letters!" says Maggie. "Fresh ones, too!"

"What!" shout the two men, springing up and seizing them.

"My letter!" gasps Paul.

"And mine!" wails Max.

They turn the bits over and examine them carefully.

"Is the address left?" asks Paul.

"Part of it. The name 'Smith.' What is that writing remaining on yours?"

"'I shall be glad to see you Wednesday evening.'"

They groan and collapse.

THE END.

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